

THE

Poniconformist.

THE DISSIDENCE OF DISSENT AND THE PROTESTANTISM OF THE PROTESTANT RELIGION.

VOL. XXXVI.—NEW SERIES, No. 1537.

LONDON: THURSDAY, MAY 6, 1875.

PRICE { WITH SUPPLEMENT } UNSTAMPED.....5d.
{ STAMPED5d.

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Ecclesiastical Affairs.

THE ANNUAL REPORT.

We have now before us in its authentic form the Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the Liberation Society to the Council. We need not commend the document to the thoughtful perusal of our readers. From them it is not only entitled to, but we have no doubt it will command, earnest attention. Not, indeed, that it contains any topics the interest of which is derived from their novelty; for most, if not all, of them have been in turn brought under notice in these columns, but that it exhibits a bird's-eye view of the principal features of the movement to which it relates, in their connection one with another, and in their proportion one towards another, during the twelve months that have intervened between May last year and the present time. Of course, some matters already become historical are alluded to, which have nearly passed out of remembrance. But the lessons which they teach, the inferences which they warrant, and the consideration which they claim as parts of a whole, more than justify the position assigned to them in the report.

There will be no necessity for us to reproduce, even in the most condensed summary, the contents of this official paper. It may suffice to remark that, eloquent as is the language of the report, it fully equals the reputation acquired by its predecessors in regard to the thorough, business-like bearing of its scope and form. It has a purpose, and it answers it. It glances at the past with a simple view to the future. All the varied lights reflected by the incidents it recalls to mind, are concentrated upon the pathway which the organisation must hereafter tread. It is this which gives especial interest to the details with which we are familiar, and which imparts to the document a tone of earnestness which stirs our sympathies. It glances in its introductory passages at the position in which the society found itself at the Triennial Conference last year; at the cataclysm which the Liberal party had sustained from the unexpected issue of the general election; at the retirement of Mr. Gladstone's Administration in prompt recognition of the return by the constituent bodies of a large Conservative majority in the House of Commons; and at the undismayed spirit in which these facts were regarded by the leaders and supporters of the Disestablishment movement. I fairly be looked upon as an easy one. Much

The report submits sufficient evidence that the calm intrepidity with which the shock had been met was in no sense an empty bravado. So far from having disheartened the friends of religious equality, they were rather stimulated by it to increased exertion. They instantly set to work at completing and extending the basis of their organisation. They brought their efforts to bear upon a larger area of the population. They started an adequate fund for the efficient prosecution of their designs during the next five years. They addressed themselves with unfaltering courage to those new wants which the issue of the late election had disclosed to them, and they now reviewed with sober satisfaction the progress they have made in giving effect to the resolutions they then formed.

Some space is given in the report to a sketch of what has been done, or attempted, in Parliament in behalf of the society's principles, or in resistance of the invasions to which they have been exposed. We lay no great stress upon this feature of the report. It could not be omitted, of course, but there is comparatively little in it to give satisfaction. What effect it may have upon the opinion and action of constituent bodies when they shall be next summoned to record their judgment, we are quite willing to leave in the uncertainty in which it rests for the present. Perhaps we are not quite so sanguine in our expectations as some of the friends of the movement, by no means deficient in shrewdness or sobriety, profess themselves to be. But this we confidently gather from all that has passed in Parliament, namely, that its educational power on the cultured and well informed classes of the community is incalculable; that its effects upon the mind of the country, albeit it may not be instantly visible, may be taken for granted, without hesitation, as mightily aiding the primary object of the association; and that, whether they will or no, whether they move or remain quiescent, the representatives of the people in the House of Commons, and the Peers, both spiritual and temporal, of the Upper House, are, consciously or unconsciously, doing their part towards furthering the ends which the great majority of them deprecate.

It was determined at the conference last year to raise a fund of 100,000^l. for carrying on the work of the society during the succeeding five years. The determination was certainly a bold one, and but for the munificent contributions of one of the treasurers and other members of his family, might possibly have turned out to be a rash one. We learn from the report that within the last twelve months, close upon half of the proposed amount has been subscribed or actually paid in. We look upon this as a wonderful as well as a significant phenomenon. When we carry our recollections back to the initial stage of the Liberation movement, and to the modest income then forthcoming in furtherance of its plans, we are overwhelmed with surprise at the startling contrast thus revealed. We would not, however, draw too large conclusions from the facts before us. The whole of the money will be wanted, no doubt, and there can be little fear, we think, that the whole of it will be forthcoming before the interval of work for which it is required will have passed away. But the task before the society, even in regard to its finances, cannot

remain to be done, and much important help may be given towards lessening the burden of labour involved. In this, as in many other matters, "he gives twice who gives quickly." While the amount already contributed is unquestionably a ground for congratulation, the number of contributors to it, and more especially the trifling sums subscribed by a considerable majority of members, must be taken as some deduction from the otherwise cheerful character of the society's financial condition and prospects. We have no doubt, however, that "the sinews of war" will be provided in proportion to the activities of those who are engaged in carrying it on, and to the exigencies of the warfare itself. They have never failed to meet the occasion, and they are not likely to fail in time to come.

The feature of the report which most impresses one's own mind, and which we anticipate will be most likely to impress the minds of our readers, is the almost ubiquitous activity of the society and its agents in the work of guiding and instructing the judgment and will of the people. We look upon it as certain to be fruitful in more than one respect. It will shed light upon one side, at least, of the question at issue; it will call forth light also on the other side. If exertions are continued in their present measure—and we have good reason to hope that they will not only be continued, but increased during the next five years—the country, we hope, will be qualified, and perhaps disposed, to pronounce a constitutional decision upon the question submitted to it. Upon this subject, however, we dilated last week. We forbear a repetition of the sentiments to which we then gave utterance. All that we need to say now is that they are fully borne out by the information set before us in the Report of the Executive Committee.

THE PROPOSED SEE OF ST. ALBAN'S.

THE Bill for the Increase of the Episcopate is rather too big a vessel to be launched on the sly. But the St. Alban's Bishopric Bill is tentatively put forth as a sort of preliminary cock-boat to try the state of the tide. Public opinion has been soothed by a promise that no attempt shall be made to draw money for the endowment of new sees from any other source than a redistribution of ecclesiastical revenues supplemented by voluntary gifts. It is as an illustration of the sort of redistribution intended that the minor measure may be of some interest to our readers. If a Wesleyan Conference Committee finds that the increase of the society in any part of the country requires a rearrangement of circuits, we are always tolerably sure that the only aim will be to give increased facilities for carrying on spiritual work. Indeed, there is hardly any temptation to think of anything else. From the constitution of the society individual interests can hardly be affected. There is little worldly dignity to be kept up, and no political *prestige* to be considered. Under these circumstances, it involves no flattery of Methodist preachers to presume that they are able to keep a single eye to the progress of the Gospel as interpreted by John Wesley. On the other hand, if we may judge by the St. Alban's Bishopric Bill, the position of a political Church in any analogous effort at reorganisation is precisely the reverse of all this. Questions of revenue and dignity, patronage and *prestige*, have a mischievously disproportionate weight. The vested interests of State officials are always formidable obstacles to reform, and this appears to be especially so in matters of ecclesiastical policy, on which, from the nature of the case, no

united national opinion can be brought to bear. In such circumstances jobbery and corruption are inevitable; not because the men concerned are worse than others, but because the system in which they are entangled is bad beyond all hope of redemption.

London, meaning by that name the metropolitan district on both sides of the Thames, is at present under the spiritual lordship of three bishops, who receive between them 23,000*l.* a year for the discharge of their duties; of which 10,000*l.* goes to the Bishop of London, 8,000*l.* to Winchester, and 5,000*l.* to Rochester. These seem large incomes, and the total enormous for three clergymen. But then we are told we ought to consider the dignity and state necessary to so high an office, and we are assured that if the burdens incident to their position are considered, the bishops are really poor men. At any rate we have often been asked to believe that the work could not be done for a penny less. Notwithstanding this we find the main part of the present proposal is the erection of a new bishopric embracing two counties bordering on the metropolis, for which newly created see it is thought that 2,000*l.* may suffice, unless more can be obtained. But that is only one portion of the scheme. The diocese of London extends at present across the river into Surrey, including some of the most destitute districts of South London. Here this diocese touches that of Winchester on the one hand and of Rochester on the other; the former embracing East Surrey, with Southwark, Bermondsey, Lambeth, and Camberwell; the latter including Greenwich, Woolwich, Deptford, Lewisham, and Plumstead. The rural domain of the See of Winchester extends over West Surrey and Hampshire with the Isle of Wight; and Rochester rules over Essex and Hertfordshire, in which latter county the seat of the proposed new bishopric is situated. From this description it will be seen that the troublesome and unpleasant district of South London is a sad blot on the fair expense both of Rochester and Winchester, while it probably constitutes also the most inconvenient and forbidding portion of the London see. Take away that unpleasant spot, and there would be little to trouble the eyes of Episcopal Winchester and Rochester in their contemplations of agricultural "sweetness and light," while the imperial wealth of North London would be relieved of some of its heavier responsibilities.

Now this is in substance precisely what is proposed. The whole metropolitan portion of Surrey is to be detached from London and Winchester. It would be impossible of course to do precisely the same thing for Rochester. But the fair counties of Essex and Hertford may be detached and erected into the new See of St. Alban's, while Rochester, deprived of its rural domain, receives the leavings of London and Winchester instead. How generous it seems in the Bishop of Rochester to agree to a rearrangement of work that must fall so heavily upon him! But such generosity is not to be lightly taken advantage of. It would be unreasonable to leave no place for repentance. Accordingly the bill contains a remarkable provision, beautifully illustrating the mutual brotherly care with which these matters are arranged amongst members of the Episcopal family. This provision contemplates the possibility that the present bishop may prefer the rural part of his divided diocese, and may wish to become the first Bishop of St. Alban's. Unfortunately, however, it is not at all improbable that the new see may have to be started on an income of 2,000*l.* a year. And, besides, it possesses no palace commensurate with the grandeur of a spiritual peerage. This dire prospect is also guarded against with judicious foresight. Should peaceful Essex and Hertford seem more pleasant to the eyes than dirty Deptford and noisy Southwark, it is provided that the present Bishop of Rochester may change his name without surrendering the delights of Danbury; and he shall receive in addition "such annual sum as will, together with the revenue of the bishopric of St. Alban's, make up his net annual income to the same amount as that which he received as Bishop of Rochester."

So far, good. But how is the "revenue of the bishopric of St. Alban's" to be raised? Well, it is hoped that the much despised voluntary principle will do a good deal in founding the requisite endowments. Meanwhile, the Bishop of Winchester sets a much glorified example by surrendering his town house to be sold for the purpose. This is very much as if some Eastern potentate, finding his own endowment with a white elephant more costly than convenient, should generously offer the animal to be sold, and the proceeds to be given to the poor; only that in this case the owner might feel a temptation to keep the proceeds for himself; from which temptation an English bishop is very

happily delivered by force of law. As a correspondent of the *Record* points out, the cost of keeping up an establishment at Winchester House must be something considerable; probably twice or thrice as much as the bishop would otherwise need to spend on residence in London. But Winchester House will not suffice by itself. And, therefore, both Winchester and Rochester magnanimously consent that their successors shall each contribute 500*l.* a year from the revenues of these sees. This is the more touching in the case of Rochester, as in the event of his electing to take St. Alban's, he may be under the painful necessity of accepting 500*l.* every year from the impoverished bishop who undertakes the work of South London. Thus things are to be made pleasant all round. All three bishops are to be relieved of a troublesome and unpleasant district. The Bishop of London's Fund is to be more conveniently concentrated. Winchester gets rid of an expensive palace and receive the glory of generosity instead. The nameless successors of the present bishops cast, before they rise upon the scene, a refracted lustre of benevolence on the noble surrender of future episcopal incomes. And, more interesting to us than all, if the present Bishop of Rochester goes to St. Alban's taking his revenue with him, the promise is afforded of a laborious episcopate over some million and half of souls, in South London, at a cost of not more than 2,000*l.* a year.

ECCLESIASTICAL NOTES.

THE impression produced by the division upon the Burials Bill continues to deepen. Archdeacon Denison's letter in our impression of to-day is not the only illustration of this. The archdeacon, in consideration of certain facts relating to Church discipline, thinks that the opposition to this measure "may be very good Conservatism, but it is certainly not Churchmanship."

The *Church Times*, after saying that the moral is "how exceedingly precarious the existence of the Establishment will become when Churchmen cease to stand shoulder to shoulder," and that "with a majority of only fourteen votes against the disestablishment of our churchyards, the danger can be regarded as by no means visionary or even distant," goes on to recognise the fact that the Nonconformist grievance is tangible enough, being felt in this way:—

Sects which do not use baptism or which delay it, often can have no service at all; sects which object to forms must submit to the Anglican rite; all sects see their pastor refused access for ministerial purposes to the graves of such of their flocks as are interred in an ordinary parish churchyard.

Our contemporary proceeds to sketch the way in which all this might be removed after one of those fashions to which we were so accustomed during the Church-rate war. There are to be all manner of devices and arrangements, and provisos and distinctions, and guards, precautions, and so on. We need not discuss them, it would be sheer waste of time; but it is something to see the acknowledgment of the grievance, and the willingness to remedy it.

The *Guardian* writes with dignified cantic. It sees in the recent division the fact that the question is one which perplexes and divides Churchmen; it sees that Nonconformists will be satisfied with nothing short of religious equality, but, at the same time, that "the natural sentiment both of humanity and Christianity is revolted by the carrying on even of the most necessary conflict over a grave." It recognises, to some extent, the value of the Scotch and Irish precedents. Yet practically, it argues, the question is a difficult one. The end is this:—

On the whole, we are inclined to think that the recent division suggests some such careful investigation and some well-guarded provision on the subject, as a concession not to any actual right, but to that natural sentiment to which we have already alluded. We feel that this course is not free from danger; we do not suppose that it will in the least diminish the hostility to the Church Establishment, or affect its chances, whatever they may be, of success. But it may tend to peace, it may avoid some painful scandal in many quiet places; it is clear that it is the course which would command itself to the majority in the present House of Commons; and it would close a question which, in a less friendly Legislature, might be made a stalking-horse by the Nonconformists and the Secular party, which makes so much use of them. For these reasons we hold it worth consideration, at any rate, and if such consideration should point out a safe path of action, then action may be taken, and had better be taken soon.

Next the *Church Review*. That journal used some rather strong language before the recent division; but its tone is changed. "That there has been a grievance to Dissenters cannot be questioned," and "That there is a general disposition in the country to take a large and generous view of the situation is the true explanation of the vote of April 21," and lastly,—

That, therefore, which obstructs the carrying of the

bill is a matter of detail, and not the general principle. This matter of detail may easily be supplied, some effective check on indecorous manifestations at a funeral may be easily be provided—it is provided by the Irish Act of 1824; and then we may be sure that the minority against the bill will be transferred into a majority in favour of it, however Conservative the House may be.

After this, we may as well give a little piece of information which, if true, is of great importance, from the *Rock*:—

The Conservative leaders are now thoroughly aware that they were guilty of a great mistake in committing their friends to a distinct opposition to the Burials Bill. Notwithstanding all the pressure that could be brought to bear upon them, a large number of their supporters walked out of the House without voting. Had they been left to vote according to their truer instinct, the result of the division would have shown a large majority in favour of the bill. We trust, however, the mischief will be repaired, as we hear that a combined movement is on foot, and of such an influential character, that the Government can scarcely afford to turn a deaf ear to its representations.

At present, therefore, it looks as though no further, or, rather, no considerable, agitation of the question will be needed; but we have, as we always have, to remain firm, watchful, alert, and to see that no unworthy compromise is successfully proposed.

But this question has a side which, until now, has scarcely been looked at. The incumbent has his privileges, but also his duties, and to some men of tender and sensitive conscience one of these duties is becoming, not merely offensive, but distressing. They are obliged to bury "with sure and certain hope," men of whom they cannot and do not entertain such hope. Archdeacon Denison dwells forcibly upon this. It is the "Church grievance" in relation to this subject. The ecclesiastical journals use still stronger language than the archdeacon does. They say that this is the heaviest and sorest grievance to bear. As the *Church Times* puts it:—

Except in three specified cases, those of formally excommunicate persons, suicides, and unbaptized, any parishioner can claim and enforce the reading of the burial service over the most profligate evil-liver, the most notorious unbeliever, the most embittered enemy of the Church of England; and thus inculcate the maxim that the sin of all these things is washed away by death.

Similar language is held in other journals—just such language, in fact, as has been held by Nonconformists for generations past. Hera, as in other directions, we see, and see with gladness, a quickening of the consciences of Churchmen, a process which, if it goes on—and it is sure to go on—must end in breaking the bonds by which the system of the Establishment holds them. How far it may be our duty to assist in giving legislative relief to these consciences is a question which we may discuss another day.

The Irish Church Synod is going on with its work. An endeavour has been made to pass a rubric sanctioning processions chanting hymns around the churchyard on the occasion of a burial, but it was not successful. The preface to the Prayer-book is now under discussion. That preface is not at all like the preface to the English Prayer-book; but we will not comment upon it until we see what it ultimately turns out to be, for it is evident that almost every sentence will be a summons to battle. If little or nothing, however, should be done with this, we may remember what has been done, stating it, in the words of Judge Warren, at the Synod, last Thursday:—

There was no matter which had caused more bad feeling in England than the use of vestments, or rather the abuse of them by clergymen. It was impossible that such an array of Church millinery as had disgraced the Church of England could be permitted in the Church of Ireland. Well, they had done something here to prevent this, and had passed canons which were absolutely fatal to these Ritualistic practices which were an imitation of Rome—(applause)—and they had so far succeeded that he was confident that in future no clergyman bound by the canons of the Church of Ireland would find it possible to follow the Church of Rome in these matters. (Applause.) Another question was that of sacerdotal power, and with respect to that they had done much also in having struck out the rubric in connection with the visitation of the sick, which was thought to favour the assertion of sacerdotal power. (Hear, hear.) Then they had inserted the whole of the Revelation in their lessons, and had excluded the whole of the Apocrypha. (Hear.)

The only person, as far as our information extends, who has got out of temper throughout the proceedings of this Synod, is the Archbishop of Dublin. Dr. Trench has more than once exhibited his anger and annoyance at what has been done. Last Thursday he utterly forgot himself by characterising the discussions on Revision as "miserable debates"—an expression which elicited something like universal reprobation—so that the archbishop, although with evident reluctance, was ultimately compelled to withdraw it. The position of bishops in a Free Church is not the same as the position of Lord Bishops in an Establishment; but it would

seem that Archbishop Trench is slow in realising that fact.

We are always glad to obtain well-authenticated ecclesiastical statistics. At a meeting held at Darlington on the 9th, the Rev. W. H. Trendall, vicar of Worlaby, gave some statistics as to the number of clergymen as follows:—

Date.	No. of Clergy.	Increase	in the year.	Laity to Clergy.
1841	14,613	1,613	1,101	
1851	17,621	3,008	1,024	
1861	19,195	1,574	1,054	
1871	20,694	1,499	1,097	

Or, put it in another way, in 1841 there were 908 clergymen to 1,000,000 laymen.

1851 976 " "

1861 948 " "

1871 911 " "

It was argued from this, that the clerical body threatened to remain a fixed quantity, while the nation was advancing at the rate of 240,000 a-year. But it was forgotten that we have had an immigration of those Irish clergy who have compounded and "cut." However, such a boon cannot be bestowed again. Mr. Trendall advocates Church reform as the remedy.

We have some more statistics in the evidence of the Secretary of the Ecclesiastical Commission just given before the House of Commons Committee on the Public Worship Facilities Bill. It was then authoritatively stated that—

Up to the 31st October, 1874, 4,000 benefices have been augmented; the annual increase in the value of the living being £60,000. The sum annually devoted to the provision of curates in mining districts is £3,000. half of this sum being received by way of benefaction. £100,000. a-year is spent in the endowment of new districts.

What a condition the estates of the bishops and chapters must have been in for this sum to be realised from their better administration!

The Church rowdy element at Liberation meetings is once more developing itself. We have had, lately, to report several instances in which meetings have been both conducted and closed in utter confusion in consequence of the intemperate manner in which they have been interrupted. We can hold our own, and we intend to hold our own in spite of all such demonstrations, but we put it to our Church Defence friends whether they should not discourage such exhibitions? Do they think that good is done to their cause, or to any cause, by this sort of demonstration? Is good done by such language as Dr. Potter, of Sheffield, used at a meeting at Bradwell the week before last, when he characterised Mr. Gordon as "a bully"? Now, Dr. Potter held his own meeting at Bradwell, to reply to Mr. Gordon, last Friday. The place was crammed with people from all the surrounding villages, and—"bully" notwithstanding—the meeting passed a resolution in favour of disestablishment.

We do not know whether the Liberation Society has ever done anything at Witney, but the Churchmen there have just opened a wide door to it, which no doubt it will soon enter. It seems, according to a correspondent of the *Daily News*, that in the year 1723 a Mr. Holloway founded an unsectarian school in the town, the provisions of the trust specifying that the master was not to be a clergyman, and that the children were to be taught to read the Holy Scriptures, but nothing about the Church. The trust went through the usual history of such trusts. The Rector of Witney was made a trustee, and after the death of the first trustees the neighbouring clergymen were handed in. Then regulations were made to convert the school into a Church school: the boys were to be instructed in the Church Catechism, to attend church twice on Sunday, and, if apprenticed from the charity, to attend all the time of their apprenticeship. Representations to the Charity Commissioners procured a modification of the latter, and in 1872 it was understood that a new scheme would provide for the undenominational character of the school. But great bodies move slowly, and no new scheme has been forthcoming; but the master was told to take those children only to church whose parents wished them to go there. And now the trustees have put forth a declaration that it is henceforward to be a Church school, and a Church school only, and unless they are stopped they will make it so, although nearly all the children who attend are Nonconformist children. The Charity Commission, of course, need not be expected to take action. It is one of those institutions which will soon have to be reformed, revolutionised, or extinguished—probably the last; but there is a power above the Charity Commission—that is, the House of Commons. To that House the people of Witney had better go, and meantime invite a deputation from the Liberation Society.

THE LIBERATION SOCIETY.

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL.

The annual meeting of the Council of the Liberation Society took place at the Cannon-street Hotel yesterday afternoon, when there was an unusually large attendance of members, especially from the country. Amongst those present were Mr. Alfred Illingworth, who occupied the chair, Mr. E. A. Leatham, M.P., Mr. E. Miall, Mr. H. R. Ellington, Mr. Carvell Williams, Mr. J. C. Cox, J.P., the Rev. W. Crosskey (Birmingham), Mr. Stafford Allen, Mr. Henry Lee (Manchester), Mr. Hugh Mason (Ashton-under-Lyne), Mr. E. S. Robinson (Bristol), Mr. John Templeton, F.G.S., Sir Peter Spokes (Reading), Mr. Robert Kell (Bradford), Mr. F. Schnadhorst (Birmingham), the Rev. T. Green (Ashton-under-Lyne), Mr. T. Chatfeild Clarke, Hon. E. Lyulph Stanley, the Rev. W. Braden, Mr. George Pearson (Glasgow), Mr. T. Piddock (Hanley), Mr. J. F. Alexander (Manchester), Mr. Geo. Hastings (Birmingham), the Rev. G. S. Reaney (Warrington), the Rev. J. B. Heard, the Rev. B. Waugh, Mr. J. T. Stockburn (Kettering), the Rev. A. Gordon (Norwich), Mr. E. Thomas (Bradford), Mr. B. L. Green (Manchester), Mr. J. Hopwood, Mr. John Andrew (Leeds), the Rev. G. S. Ingram (Richmond), the Rev. T. Brooks (Wallingford), the Rev. W. Griffith (Derby), the Rev. H. Crasweller, the Rev. E. Heath (Edinburgh), Mr. A. Boarer (Folkestone), Mr. A. Ransome (Hitchin), Mr. A. Shepheard, Mr. P. Crellin, Mr. H. S. Leonard, Mr. Charles Miall, Mr. H. Ellington, Mr. H. M. Heath, Mr. John Clapham, the Rev. J. Drew (Margate), Mr. H. S. Skeats, Mr. Charles Williams (Merthyr), Mr. W. Baines (Leicester), Mr. G. H. Baines (Leicester), the Rev. T. Penrose (Reading), Mr. John Griffith ("Gohebydd"), the Rev. J. Radford Thomson (Tunbridge Wells), the Rev. R. A. Redford, Mr. T. Minshull, Mr. P. W. Clayden, Mr. M. J. Whibley (Cambridge), the Rev. R. Macbeth, Mr. H. W. Earp (Melbourne), the Rev. T. Adams (Daventry), Mr. G. Kearley, the Rev. W. Freeman (East Dereham), Mr. G. Carruthers (Bedford), Mr. C. H. Elt, Mr. A. H. Haggis, the Rev. E. Dothe, B.A., Mr. W. C. Price, Mr. J. Fisher, Mr. D. Oliver (Holywell), Mr. Z. Armitage (Warrington), the Rev. Dr. Todd, etc. Mr. ILLINGWORTH, having taken the chair, called upon

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS to read the annual report of the Executive Committee, which commenced by referring to the circumstances under which the Triennial Conference was held last May. They were then not disheartened by the results of the general election or the change of Government, but resolved to devote themselves to the work of educating the country, and submitted plans for the purpose. Those plans were approved by the conference, and the committee was at once convened for carrying them out. Arrangements were made to secure the attendance of country members of the committee at the meetings. Mr. Fisher had been appointed organising agent, and Mr. Heath, agent for Scotland. Thirty local agents had been appointed, and, when some additions have been made, "the society's operations will include the whole kingdom, and on the occurrence of any political emergency it may act with promptitude in every district." The year had been one of unprecedented activity in the use of the platform, and the services of Mr. Gordon and the Rev. J. B. Heard were specially mentioned. After referring to the district conferences which had been held, the report proceeded:—

Altogether, no fewer than about 700 meetings and lectures have been arranged for during the past twelve months. They have extended from Inverness, in the north, to Penzance, in the west, and they have embraced thirty-seven English counties. Many have been in parts of the country, or in places, in which nothing had previously been attempted, or which had long been left unvisited. While most of the large towns have been included, village lectures have been more numerous than in any previous season. The widely-spread and hugely-populated metropolis has not been omitted, as in former years, and though the results in London have varied, it has been proved that there, as well as in the country, public interest can be excited and large audiences be assembled. In most cases—whether in town or country—there has been seen an evident growth of interest, indicating the hold which the question is taking on the minds of almost all classes of the community. The Established clergy, and other upholders of Establishments, have, in many cases, attended the society's meetings, and replied to the arguments advanced. The discussions which have ensued have usually been conducted with propriety and good feeling; but, in some instances, the advocates of the existing system have, by resorting to violence and clamour, brought discredit upon themselves and upon their cause.

With respect to the £100,000. fund, which it was agreed at the conference should be raised, it was stated that the total amount specifically promised up to the present time is about £47,500.; but this does not include the annual subscriptions paid during the past year irrespective of the fund. They

amount to £4,500., and on the assumption that as much will be received in the same way during each of the remaining four years, the sum to be added to the fund from this source will be £22,500.; making a total of £70,000. This leaves £30,000. as the amount which has yet to be secured, and the committee propose to make the raising of that sum an important part of the business of the year on which they are about to enter, and the liberality of the many will, it is hoped, be stimulated by the liberality of the few. The committee are now pledged to an expenditure which must, of necessity, grow as the conflict in which they are engaged, becomes more and more severe. Other methods of action than those already made public may be adopted, when the expenditure which they will involve can with safety be incurred. Nor will those who have watched the course of the society during a period of more than thirty years doubt that larger funds will be as carefully expended as the smaller income which sufficed to meet its earlier wants.

The Manchester Conference having requested the committee to consider the desirability of preparing a statement of the legal changes involved in disestablishment, and of the principles which should be adopted in disendowing the Established Churches, they appointed a special committee, composed of both town and country members, to deliberate on the best means of complying with the request.

That special committee has held several sittings; has arranged for the collection and publication of reliable information respecting the nature and amount of the property in possession of the English Establishment, and has had under consideration a series of questions, involving the fundamental principles on which any satisfactory scheme of disestablishment and disendowment must be based. It need scarcely be added that some of the problems to be solved are of a very perplexing character; nor will any one conversant with the subject doubt that the progress made must necessarily be slow. And as the time occupied by the inquiry will be spent in efforts to secure adhesion to the principle of disestablishment, the practical application of that principle will be more intelligently discussed than it would be at the present moment.

The part taken by the committee in opposing the Endowed Schools Bill of last session was next described, and of its successful result it was said:— "Such a result was especially gratifying to the supporters of Disestablishment; inasmuch as it was frankly accepted as a proof that the power alleged to have been almost destroyed at the general election still existed, and could exert a decisive influence on the Government and on Parliament."

The debate and division on the Burial Bill had sustained that conclusion, and both were described, and it was added that—

The votes in its favour were also actually greater than in 1870, when a Liberal Government was in office, and the Liberal party had lost none of its confidence or strength. Such an issue has been justly regarded as being less a defeat than a victory. It is an indication that the time is approaching when it will be generally agreed that this unseemly contention should cease, and that there should be granted in England and Wales a liberty which—as the votes of Scotch and Irish representatives conclusively prove—has been enjoyed without abuse in other parts of the kingdom.

The action of the society in regard to the Scottish Patronage Bill was described at length, as well as its subsequent proceedings in connection with the disestablishment movement in Scotland. Of its work there it was said:—

It will be attended by many difficulties, and the progress may, for a time, seem to be inconsiderable. But it will be ultimately successful, and the progress will be uninterrupted. The processes by which public opinion is formed in Scotland, if slower, are more sustained than in other parts of the kingdom, and there is less likelihood of suspension or of reaction. The discussions continually occurring in ecclesiastical assemblies, the issue of ably-written pamphlets and tracts, and the action of an intelligent newspaper press, will all tend to undermine the edifice of State-Churchism. And when once disestablishment, as a practical policy, as well as an idea, takes possession of the Scottish mind, the electoral results will be certain to be in harmony with public feeling.

The introduction of the Religious Worship Bill last session, and its passage through Parliament, were next adverted to; together with the change of feeling on the subject which had since taken place. Of the address of the bishops it was said,—

The response elicited by their appeal, must be as discouraging to themselves as it is threatening to the security of the Church. If there be alienation between the clergy and the laity, there is probably a stronger feeling of distrust, amounting, in many cases, to undisguised antipathy, between the bishops and a large section of the Episcopal Church. Those who were to be repressed by the Act of last session are still resolute and defiant; while the feeling which carried the measure has visibly abated, and the public conscience will be for a time satisfied with having made a statutory protest, however inadequate its practical effect. But, whether the new law be enforced, or be allowed to become a nullity, a decisive struggle between contending parties within the English Establishment is not likely to be averted, and, when the crisis comes, it is possible that the nation will be more willing than heretofore to accept the conclusions of those who see no other mode of relieving the State from embarrassment and of quelling commotion in the Church, than by dissolving the tie which unites them, without advantage to either, and with manifest injury to both. So far, however, from finding in the present condition of the Church of England reasons for any relaxation of effort, the committee feel that fresh exertions are called for, to guide perplexed, and almost despairing, Episcopalian into the way of safety, because the way of justice and of truth. Even were it probable, as is suggested, that the Establishment will fall to pieces, as the result of intestine strife, the prospect is one which cannot be

regarded with complacency by those who desire that the issue may be decided by reason, and by conscience, and not by the violence of contending factions within the Church. While it cannot be doubted that many members of the Church of England regard disestablishment as inevitable, and are even prepared to accept it with resignation, there is in other quarters a determination to endeavour to maintain the Establishment by comprehensive, and even bold measures of Church reform. Some of these measures are now before Parliament, and others of greater magnitude are projected. The Public Worship Facilities Bill was described as a practical abandonment of the parochial principle, and as being limited in conception, and likely to create new anomalies.

The bills for increasing the Episcopate were objected to in the following passage :—

It is a proof of the hold which the principle of religious equality has obtained on the public mind that no one now ventures to propose to tax the nation even for the extension of the National Church. But the property with which it is proposed to endow the Bishopric of St. Albans is public property, and, if a time of disestablishment be approaching, it is important to prevent the creation of new vested interests. It is of still greater importance to resist the multiplication of bishops who will be appointed by, and will be functionaries of, the State; will sit in Parliament; will exert their political influence to obstruct measures of reform, and will possess authority and privileges which will give them an unfair advantage over the ministers of other religious communities. Those are objections which may be fitly urged by Nonconformists; but even Episcopalians, who desire an extension of the episcopate, have a right to object to the proposed method of securing it. The choice of bishops by the Prime Minister—the mockeries of the *coups d'élire*—the mischiefs of episcopal peerages—the wastefulness of cathedral establishments, and the absurdities of unreformed ecclesiastical courts, are all perpetuated by these measures, which are simply measures for extending what many thoughtful Churchmen now regard with absolute aversion. They are measures which indicate either that their framers have learned nothing from the experience of the past, or that they are resolved to ignore difficulties with which they feel themselves unable to grapple.

The efforts of the Bishop of Peterborough were, no doubt, honestly made, but his bill perpetuated the traffic which he denounced as iniquitous. It was, however, added :—

The author of the measure is less responsible for its shortcomings than is the institution the interests of which he seeks to promote. Whatever may be his own wishes, he knows that the vested interests involved are too great to admit of the prohibition of the sale of either next presentations or advowsons. He knows that patrons in the Church of England would not submit to legislation which, however needful for the Church's purity, would depreciate the value of their property, and affect the personal interests of their families or their friends. He knows further that, while compensation would be demanded, it would be compensation on a far higher scale than that which can be claimed by the despoiled patrons of the Scottish Establishment, and that, without disestablishment, the required funds are absolutely unattainable. His legislative proposals, therefore, of necessity fall short of his desires; the full attainment of which he himself probably knows to be impracticable. He will, however, help to create a public opinion which will eventually wholly destroy a system invariably bad; but which will do so only by putting an end to the Establishment of which it forms an essential part.

The committee respected the aims of Church reformers, but—

They firmly believe that no changes in the antiquated machinery of a State Establishment can bring any Church into harmony with the feelings and the wants of the present age, or satisfy the highest aspirations of its members. Parliament can, by disestablishing the Church of England, give it liberty to effect reforms adapted to the needs of a religious community, and not to the exigencies of a politico-ecclesiastical institution. It has done so in the case of the Church of Ireland, and the members of the Church are effecting, without any hindrance from without, changes which are likely to give to it new vitality, and which show that they can exercise, with wisdom as well as energy, that right of self-government which but a short time ago was denied to them, as it is still denied to their brethren in the English Church.

The report closed as follows :—

It may take much time, and it may require much patient labour, to produce this conviction in the minds of those who still cling to the State as an ally without whose aid neither the Church nor religion can hope to prosper. It may also, for awhile, continue to be difficult to convince those who, without fearing for the Church, believe that the State would suffer, were it to assume a position of neutrality in the midst of differing and self-supported religious communities. While interest in the subject is constantly growing, it may be admitted that the masses of the people are not yet fully conscious of the political and social evils which are traceable to that ecclesiastical policy which has for centuries so deeply affected the national life. And because the work of education is thus incomplete, and public opinion is not yet sufficiently advanced to justify a boldly aggressive movement, even political leaders who discern the signs of a coming change hesitate to commit themselves to a policy of the inevitability of which they are nevertheless conscious. Persistence and courage, combined with prudence and unwavering faith, will, however, ultimately sweep away all such obstacles from our path. The present is the time for the sowing of seed, which will fall into prepared soil, and the growth of which will be promoted by almost innumerable favouring influences. We need not inquire when the fruit will be gathered. “*In due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*” When the nation has been prepared for great events, they come—though the time of their coming cannot be predicted. When the mind of the people of these realms is fully set upon disestablishment, as essential to their future well-being, there will be the statesmanship, the energy, and the enthusiasm, which will be required for its accomplishment.

We have wielded the weapons of our warfare for many a year, and they have never yet failed us. We have, at times, been beaten back; but we have always ultimately advanced, and then have kept the ground that has been won. The truth we hold is stronger than our foes, and stronger than we ourselves are, and with God's help we will maintain it until it has at length prevailed!

Several passages of the report were received with cheers, which were renewed when Mr. Williams sat down.

The CHAIRMAN said the report was characteristic of the mode in which their worthy secretary did everything to which he put his hand; it was complete, clear, concise, and of great ability. The executive committee looked forward to this gathering to take counsel as to the work before them. The meeting must be of a business character, and he should not be justified in occupying much of their time. But he might be permitted to make an allusion or two to the report. Recognising, as they were bound to do, that the Liberal party was thoroughly beaten, they had, nevertheless, the gratification of knowing that their own section of the party was stronger and more united than before the dissolution of the late Parliament. The first proof of this was given by the division on Mr. Henry Richard's motion for the repeal of the 25th clause, when many members of the late Government, having recovered their freedom, and acting on their own convictions, no longer gave an unwavering loyalty to a Government that had gone astray on the education question. Then with regard to the Burials Bill, the present position of things was a great grievance to many people living in agricultural districts. Not the least gratifying circumstance was the fact that Mr. Gladstone had for the first time of late found his voice on this Burials Bill. More significant still was the speech of Mr. Bright. On no previous occasion had he wielded with such effect the great influence of which he is master whenever he speaks. The Christian spirit and the common sense which he threw into that debate had told on the division, and on a powerful party both within and without the House of Commons; and it was felt that to keep up this controversy any longer, was telling against the Church itself. He thought that when they looked outside the House of Commons the evidence afforded every confidence concerning the work to which they had set their hands. The manner in which the bishops' pastoral had been received in the Church and by the press showed that there was a widespread spirit of insubordination prevailing, and that such a document was most unsuited to the times. In Convocation, too, they had evidence that no good could be expected from what ecclesiastics might do. He could not help also saying that there never had been a time when such scandals so much prevailed. The insults offered to them in churchyards had strengthened the feeling against the Establishment. He said they were all ready to admit that as a religious institution the Church had made great efforts to meet the religious wants of the community; but while this was admitted, they were giving the most complete proof possible of the omnipotence of voluntarism to do everything that was necessary. Canon Gregory had said that Churchmen ought to be ashamed of themselves for the utter insufficiency of their contributions towards the machinery needed by the Church; and had pointed to what had been done by the Free Church of Scotland and the Dissenters here. Proceeding in his speech, the Chairman towards its conclusion remarked that Mr. Gladstone in reply to Mr. Miall thought to frighten the country by the hugeness of the figures involved in the disestablishment of the Church. He said it would take ninety millions of money to meet the life claims in the English Church; but they were able to say that no such sum was necessary. If we satisfy life interests we are not to take the position of bankers and capitalists by having anything to do with other claims. The embarrassment indicated by Mr. Gladstone might never occur. He hoped that before next winter the country would be well worked by those who had this year been added to their staff. There were thirty agents where formerly there were but ten, and these twenty had only lately been added. They had therefore every reason to look for a grand campaign. He asked the co-operation of the council in the work to which they had set their hands. It was not a small thing to get 100,000, but from what had been done there was no reason to suppose that they would not succeed. (Cheers.)

Mr. H. R. ELLINGTON, one of the treasurers, then presented the financial statement, which showed that the subscriptions for the year amounted to 15,754L 15s. 9d.; the income from all sources to 12,868L 7s. 6d.; the expenditure to 11,962L 14s. 2d. leaving a balance in hand of 905L 13s. 4d. He said in reference to the somewhat unusual sum of money in the hands of the bankers, which was very encouraging to the treasurers, it must not be supposed they had all that to the good, for although they had paid up as closely as they could, there were some accounts outstanding which would considerably reduce that balance. After the last election it was proposed by their Yorkshire friends that a sum of 100,000 should be raised as an answer to the saying that they had been beaten. They had reason to thank God and take courage, for their subscriptions had been 5,000 more than year than ever before. (Cheers.) In all the circumstances of discouragement in which it was supposed they were placed, they had great reason to be satisfied with the result.

The committee felt that their work was a very arduous one, and the best assistance they could receive from their friends would be to see that the public were kept up to the mark as regards their principles. Although they had veterans there who had fought long and laboriously who might not see the end of the fight, they did not expect to lay down their arms. They had been so long accustomed to battle for their rights, that if they had not to fight they might be disposed to avail themselves of Mr. Osborne Morgan's Burials Bill. (Laughter.) In regard to the special fund, he did not think London had yet done its part. London was a very large village, and it was difficult to get at the people who were disposed to give, but they hoped by the stimulus of the Yorkshire friends they would improve, and that they would be able to present a better report next year. (Cheers.)

Mr. HUGH MASON (Ashton) moved the following resolution :—

That the council receives and adopts the report of the executive committee and the treasurer's statement now presented, and, in doing so, expresses great satisfaction at the recent extension of the society's agencies; at the increased vigour with which its principles have been advocated, by means of the platform and the press, and especially in the small towns and in the rural districts of the country; and also at the evident growth of interest in the society's object among all classes of the people. The council also expresses the hope that the executive committee, in carrying on their future operations, will continue to be sustained by effective local effort; confidently believing that a wise and persevering use of existing opportunities will prepare the public mind for the important changes needed for the completion of their work.

If he had had anything to do with the drawing up of the resolution, he should have inserted a word or two more complimentary to the executive committee, for as he had been thrown into contact with the society's agents during the last two or three years, he could say that they had done their work with great ability and earnestness, and honesty, and with great and good results. He could also say from his own personal knowledge, although he came from the North, and from that county which was at present steeped in Toryism, Lancashire, they had not lost heart at the depression which had come upon them during the last year or two. They were old enough to remember that similar depression came upon them before every great measure given to the country by Parliament, and they had no fear but that even Lancashire would yet do its duty in regard to that question. The interest which prevailed with regard to the principles of that society, and the object they had in view, was very truthfully represented in the resolution as affecting all classes. Not only was interest taken in it by those who were friendly, but by those who were unfriendly, and by those who would consider its success a great disaster. So that the work of the society created the greatest interest in the minds of all classes of the community, and would continue to do so. The chairman had alluded to, and drawn some comfort from, the results of the last few elections. He (the speaker) wished that the present Government might continue in office for another five years, for he thought the Liberal party was not prepared for a return to power. The greatest calamity that could happen to the Liberal party would be the speedy accession of a Liberal Ministry. The longer the present Government continued in office, the more their official friends would approach that society, and throw off those shackles which enchain them. He thought even Mr. Bright felt himself released from ties and shackles, which enabled him to speak in more decided tones than when he was a member of the Liberal Government. He looked for growth in that respect from Mr. Gladstone, and he hoped the time would come when he would see that it was for the good of the country that that question should be made the question of the day. With regard to disendowment, he hoped the scheme which the society was about to place before the country would be one which they could accept. He did not look for action from any section within the Church of England: the money kept them together, and until something was done to make it pleasing to them they would not concur. He believed the question of money was a great curse to the Irish Church, and although he did not wish the Episcopal Church to be cursed with a great deal of money, yet if they were determined to have it, he was not prepared to say they should not. He was prepared to help the committee by his purse and personal effort, and he had no doubt their exertions would be well rewarded. (Cheers.)

The Rev. H. W. CROSSKEY (Birmingham), seconded the resolution, and said it appeared that there was at the present moment only one political organisation in a state of healthfulness, not distracted, and not without a programme. It was a cause for thankfulness that the Liberal leadership did not fall into the hands of Mr. Forster. He thought it would be a very serious evil for any ecclesiastical organisation to be largely endowed with great sums of money. If the Church of England was to do any good, it could only be by appealing thoroughly and heartily to the support of its own members. The society was entering upon a larger national character than it had before, and was identifying itself with all classes.

The Rev. A. GORDON, of Norwich, said that it had been proposed to hold a conference in Norwich, but it had been postponed through the election; but they hoped to hold it in the autumn.

Mr. F. TUCKETT thought that some more practical directions were needed by the constituents of the society. He believed the mainspring of action was in the unenfranchised, and that if they were called upon in every district to petition Parliament

for the abolition of the State-Church system, it would be a practical gain. The resolution was carried unanimously.

The Rev. W. BRADEN moved the following resolution :—

That the council shares in the feeling of deep regret expressed by the executive committee at the loss which they have sustained by the death of the Rev. H. W. Parkinson, the Rev. G. W. Conder, and Mr. Ashworth Briggs, and that it confirms the appointment of the Rev. H. W. Crosskey, of Birmingham; Mr. Geo. H. Baines, of Leicester; the Rev. Thos. Green, of Ashton-under-Lyne; Mr. Samuel Watts, of Manchester; the Rev. J. T. Brown, of Northampton; and Mr. James Hopwood, of London, to fill the several vacancies in the executive committee which have occurred since the Triennial Conference.

It reminded him somewhat of the picture of the "Roll Call," for many of the members had fallen out of the ranks—not that they had been traitors, but some had been disabled by age. So long as Mr. Edward Miall was the leader he would be an example to all venerable men to be faithful unto death. He also referred to a recent speech of the Bishop of Oxford, in which he expressed the opinion that the managers of that society had overdone their part. But if that were so, how was it that they could raise such a large amount of money to carry on the object, while Church Defence Associations were crying out for funds, and that the religious Dissenters were coming over to them in shoals? (Hear, hear.)

Sir PETER SPOKE (Reading) seconded the resolution, and referred to a visit which the secretary made to Reading three years ago, when there was a disturbance.

Mr. E. S. ROBINSON (Bristol), supported the resolution. He did not know exactly what constituted the Liberal party, for various answers were returned to the question, and they could not expect cohesion until they were more agreed. But he believed that before many years disestablishment and disendowment would be the key-note of that party. It was said that the subject of disendowment was the greater of the two questions, and that many Episcopalians would favour disestablishment if they could get rid of disendowment. He did not see the wonderful difficulty of disendowment. If they decided that Church property was national property, why should it not go to pay the national debt?

The resolution was then adopted.

Mr. E. MIALL: Gentlemen of the Council, I have very little to say, I am not able to say much, and, happily, it is not needful that much should be said. The resolution which has been entrusted to me is a money resolution, not, I suppose, because I have associated myself very closely with the money business of the society, but, I presume, in order that I may convey from the executive committee to the council our extreme gratitude for what has been done in this respect throughout the year. The resolution is :—

It having been resolved at the Triennial Conference to endeavour to raise, during the next five years, the sum of £100,000 for the purpose of widely extending the society's operations, the council is gratified to learn that promises for a large proportion of the amount have already been secured. The council warmly thanks those whose prompt liberality has secured this result, and earnestly trusts that the society's supporters generally will yet further strengthen the hands of the executive committee by seconding their efforts to obtain, without further delay, the amount still required.

I believe, sir, it was you who had the courage, I may almost say the audacity, to propose the raising of the £100,000 Fund, and I have no doubt that your courage was both prompted and sustained by what you yourself, and your immediate family intended doing towards it. For my own part, I looked upon it as a rash proceeding, and it is quite clear that I was wrong. (Laughter.) I believe that boldness oftentimes commands success, and the larger the efforts we make the completer will be the results we attain. When we began this society we thought a few hundreds a year a munificent contribution of the public to the object we had in view. Of course we extended our operations and multiplied our resources to the greatest possible extent of our ability; but, I believe, one of our financial agents retired from this society some years ago simply on the ground that he saw no prospect of our getting £2,000 a year; and that unless we had that sum we could have little hope of doing anything. The contrast is amazing to me! The mere fact that in the year past we have gathered £50,000 is most encouraging. I cannot sit down without saying one word respecting the suggestions thrown out on the subject of disestablishment. In the first place I hope that the council will, as it seems likely to do, confide in those who have specially undertaken to carry out the plans that will involve responsibility in this respect. Next, I do not at all agree with my friend Mr. Mason that liberality towards the political institution (it is hardly a corporation), called the Church of England, will be at all compatible with ordinary political sagacity. We ought to set our faces against handing over permanently and without control large funds to a State-Church which has heretofore used such resources to counteract the mental and religious progress of the people. (Hear, hear.) Real statesmanship would take special care to guard against the serious danger of having the Establishment richly endowed without the smallest control from the State. (Cheers.) But there is another phase of the subject, suggested by the speech of Mr. Tuckett. I do not know precisely what is in his mind, and what his plan of disendowment might be. It would be quite easy to say to the whole of the clergy, We will pay you up to the last hour you are employed, but we cannot look at your life interests, or consider your personal claims. That

is one way of doing it; but I do not think it would be practical, even though we had a large number of the working classes in sympathy with this view. What we aim at is this: that no man shall have personal loss in consequence of the alteration that would ensue; and although all would probably come to the conclusion that the Church as a system should not have a farthing, yet the poor people or the rich people, who had been part of the machinery of the Church until the nation changed its views, should not suffer personal loss any more than servants who have been connected with any department of the State should suffer loss upon their discharge. I say this because it is necessary. Let me also say: Please confide in the committee. I can assure the council that the pains taken not only to be right in fact, but to be morally right in their conclusions, have entitled the committee to your fullest confidence. I hope your next year will be more prosperous than the past year, prosperous and successful though that has been. (Cheers.)

Mr. H. LEE (Manchester), moved the following resolution :—

That the council regards with approbation the determination of the executive committee to collect further information relative to the property and revenues in the possession of the English Establishment, and to prepare practical suggestions which may assist in the framing of a scheme of disestablishment and disendowment. Approving of the steps already taken for the purpose, the council recognises the necessity for the fullest investigation and the most careful deliberation in dealing with the difficulties inseparable from the task which the committee have undertaken.

From his knowledge of the labours of the Disendowment Committee, he felt the question was not such an easy one as some of the previous speakers supposed. They hoped in a few months to publish their scheme, and he hoped all those who were opposed to it would point out where its defects lay and amend them. But he would ask the council to confide in the committee. Their conflict would be a hard one, but they had no occasion to feel a want of courage, for it must eventually be a successful one. A great number of Churchmen viewed the connection of Church and State as part of their religion, and they had to show them that their ecclesiastical organisation could exist independently of the State; and they must do so in a just and generous spirit. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. J. C. COX (Belper) seconded the resolution. As a Churchman, and one who knew something of Church returns, he felt the resolution was quite accurate in speaking of the difficulties of preparing a scheme of disendowment, and he was sure that the time and attention devoted to the subject would not be wasted, even if they only collected accurate statistics about Church property. He had been struck with the gross inaccuracies in the published returns of clerical incomes, and mentioned one or two instances.

Mr. JOHN EDWARDS (London) said he thought they should bring before the working classes the probable result of the separation of Church and State, so that they might be prepared for the next election.

The Hon. LYULPH STANLEY moved :—

That the council heartily concurs in the policy of the executive committee in submitting to the present Parliament a simple and decided measure for securing religious equality in parochial churchyards. While the Burials Bill has been for the present defeated, the proceedings in the House of Commons on the second reading have satisfied the council that public opinion on the question has made a great advance since it was discussed in the last Parliament, and that the nation will not much longer allow the clergy of the English Establishment to possess exclusive rights which inflict wrong upon large sections of the community, and which do not exist in other portions of the kingdom.

He thought they had every reason to congratulate themselves upon the discussion on the Burials Bill. The argument as to raising funds for the keeping of the churchyard in order was merely a fanciful one. The bill was needed as a recognition of the rights of Dissenters, and they should not be satisfied with the extension of cemeteries, but claim their right to the parish churchyard.

The Rev. THOS. WILLIAMS (Merthyr) seconded the resolution.

The Rev. WM. GRIFFITHS (Derby) thought they should not only claim the churchyard, but the use of the church also, in the next bill.

The Rev. G. S. INGRAM moved :—

The council regards with great hopefulness the present state of opinion in Scotland in regard to the Church Establishment of that country. Instead of strengthening the institution, the passing of the Patronage Act has united against it all other ecclesiastical bodies, and the conviction is becoming general that the Church of a minority of the population ought not longer to be exceptionally favoured by the State. The council highly approves of the recent action of the executive committee in Scotland, and trusts that their future labours, aided by those of other public bodies aiming at the same object, will have a marked effect in advancing the cause of disestablishment in that country.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. GEO. PEARSON (Glasgow), and carried.

Mr. ROBERT KELL (Bradford) moved, and the Rev. J. B. HEARD seconded, the following resolution, which was also carried :—

That the council, while it regards with sympathy the efforts of members of the Church of England to secure for it increased freedom of action, and to cure evils which injuriously affect its character and impair its efficiency, believes that such efforts must prove altogether unavailing so long as the needed reforms can be effected only by the legislature. The council also feels bound to object to the measures now before Parliament for increasing the number of bishops, inasmuch as such bishops will be State functionaries, exercising an injurious political influence, and occupying a position of legal superiority over the ministers of all other religious communities.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman was moved by Mr. RICHARD WHIBLEY (Cambridge), and seconded by Mr. STAFFORD ALLEN, and the meeting separated.

THE PUBLIC MEETING.

The annual meeting of the Liberation Society was held on Wednesday evening in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and as is usual on these annual gatherings that vast building was filled with an earnest and enthusiastic audience, largely composed of men, though the ladies did not fail to be present also—an audience which listened carefully and critically to the eloquent speeches delivered from the platform, and showed itself as ready to applaud the hearty and earnest protests of the Chairman against the supposition that they were opposed to the English Church as a religious institution, as it was to cheer the biting sarcasms of the Rev. Dr. Mellor. The chair was occupied by Mr. Richard, M.P., and with him on the platform were many men equally well-tried with himself in the great battle for freedom from State control, whose names appear below. These gentlemen, on entering the platform, was very warmly cheered.

The CHAIRMAN, as the first business, called upon the Secretary to present a summary of the report.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS, who was very warmly received, said the last annual meeting showed those to be greatly mistaken who thought that the Liberationists had sustained a crushing defeat because their friends were beaten at a general election and turned out of office. They were neither cast down nor utterly destroyed. As they had gained in times past from the temporary exclusion of their friends from office, so they hoped to gain from it again; and at any rate they determined to employ the interval in systematic and resolute efforts to educate not only the party but the country, so that when a general election once more came they might all be found fighting together beneath the banner of religious equality. (Cheers.) Plans were prepared for carrying out that object, and they were so warmly approved by the Triennial Conference which assembled at that time that it resolved to raise £100,000, during the next five years for carrying on the work. Although the summer was nearly ended the executive committee at once went to work, and, with the exception of a few weeks in the autumn, had been working ever since. As a result he had to report that whereas they commenced the year with ten agents, they had now thirty, and the work was not yet complete, as ten or a dozen more would be appointed during the coming year. Although their machinery was not in full operation, and only a few months had elapsed, they had already held 700 meetings—(cheers)—not merely in the large towns but in small towns and villages of the names of many of which he was previously ignorant. The agents reported what was previously suspected, that as much interest in this subject prevailed in the country parishes as among the town populations. (Cheers.) At these meetings also, to a greater extent than in any previous years, they had had the presence of the Established clergy, who had boldly come forward to defend the institution which the members of this society thought it their duty to assail. For the most part the opposition was conducted in a gentlemanly and Christian spirit, and in some cases the defenders of the Establishment of the respectable sort had taken to themselves certain lewd fellows of the baser sort—(laughter)—and had succeeded in converting their meetings into bear-gardens. But these uproarious meetings did them nearly as much good as orderly ones, and they rarely had a second one in the same place, for the supporters of the Establishment became ashamed of their acts and felt that if the Church could be defended in no better way, it had better be given up as indefensible. Upwards of a million of publications, large and small, had been sent out, many of them into the country districts; they heard from all quarters that their works were read with avidity by the working men and villagers, and in fact the circulation of their literature afforded just as satisfactory evidence of the increase of public opinion in their favour as did the public meetings. All this could not have taken place but for the liberality of their friends in connection with the special fund. During the year £12,868 had been raised, about 5,000 more than had ever previously been contributed for the support of that society—(cheers)—and they had now a balance of £800, which would suffice for the wants of the next few weeks. Of the special fund of £100,000, they already saw their way to £70,000, and they were now going to work to raise the remainder. In this matter he hoped that London would emulate the liberality of other parts of the country.

Mr. Williams went on to refer to the Parliamentary history of the past few months. The victory over the Endowed Schools Bill was, according to Mr. Gladstone's acknowledgment, won by the Nonconformists; while a bill for abolishing the clerical monopoly in churchyards—which was a thoroughly satisfactory measure, and not, as was that of the previous year, a weak, inadequate proposal—actually received more votes in this Parliament, in which they were supposed to be in a hopeless minority, than were obtained in 1870, immediately after a Liberal party had come flushed with victory from the polls. The Act for dealing with the question of patronage in the Scotch Church, so far from bolstering it up, had already united the members of the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church against the Establishment, and now

they had a fair chance of raising the question of disestablishment there on a practical issue. The Scotch Church in the nature of things ought to go first, and when it had gone the English Church would be the last in a row of demolished houses. The clauses in the Public Worship Bill enacting that every one who complained of a Church clergyman should be himself a member of the Church of England, and that the judge of the proposed court should also be a member of the same Church, were ineffectually opposed, but the result was that by an Act of Parliament the Church had become the Church of a sect and not the Church of the nation. (Applause.) These, with the bills for increasing the number of bishops, and that of the Bishop of Peterborough, not to abolish the sale of livings, but to divest the process of its grosser features, showed that their teaching had not been without good results, that Churchmen were becoming ashamed of many things which existed in their Church, and that that society had only to labour on to convince them that these evils were incurable except by disestablishment. They did not expect to win the final battle without long struggling, and possibly long waiting. Nor did they think the Establishment would fall from internal divisions. It was not desirable such an issue should take place. They professed to be, and hoped they were, Christian men, and therefore they wished to see this conflict come to an end, not by strife between the Church and the nation, but as the triumph of reason and conscience. (Loud cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN said as they were constantly liable to misconception, perhaps he might be allowed to explain what they were attempting to accomplish. In the first place, he wished to repudiate with the strongest emphasis that he could put into words the imputation that they cherished any hostility to the Episcopal Church as a religious institution. (Cheers.) It would be the blindest bigotry to deny that the Church had done great and eminent service to the cause of Christian truth, and he believed there was work to be done in this country that could not be done, or at any rate so effectually, by any other religious body. In any case they wanted all the agency that could possibly be obtained to overtake the spiritual necessities of their vast and rapidly increasing population. God forbid, therefore, that they should look with jealousy or grudgingly upon any body of Christian men engaged in this work simply because they followed not with them. They did not wish to touch one hair of the head of the Episcopal Church. They might keep their articles and liturgy, much of which everyone acknowledged to be very beautiful, unaltered to the end of time, retaining even their curaing Athanasian Creed, so long as their Christian conscience would allow them to do so. (Laughter.) They might have bishops as plenty as blackberries, provided they did not want them made State-officials, and to be endowed from national property. They might assume any attribute they pleased—clothe themselves in any official robes they pleased, and attach any symbolical significance to their acts they pleased, on which they could agree among themselves—(laughter)—provided they did not compromise the nation by doing these things in its name, and with its assumed and apparent sanction. (Cheers.) And so far as they were doing Christian work—and thousands of them were doing it with an earnestness and devotion which might well excite admiration and provoke emulation—from the bottom of their hearts they wished them God-speed in the name of the Lord. He denied, therefore, the charges brought against them of wishing to destroy or pull down the Church. According to his conception, instead of pulling down, they wished to lift the Church up from the mire of worldly association and Parliamentary control, by which its life was half-smothered, into the pure air and clear light of Christian liberty. Secondly, they engaged in this agitation with no selfish purpose or motives. They asked nothing in the way of privilege, patronage, power, prerogative, or advantage of any kind. All the measures passed in the interests of Nonconformity, from the Revolution of 1688 until now, and all the measures they were seeking to get passed, were merely measures of relief; the repeal of some persecuting law, the removal of some humiliating disability, the striking off of some galling fetter, the erasure of some blighting brand, the wrenching asunder of some obstacle that stood in the way of their enjoyment of the common rights of citizenship. There was a time when their opponents charged them with casting a covetous eye on their ecclesiastical possessions, and intending to confiscate the property of the Church, in order to enrich themselves from the spoil. It was hard to believe that those who made these accusations were in earnest, seeing that the only benefaction from the Government which the Nonconformists of this country ever received was the *Regium Donum*, so hateful to their feelings that they rested not until it was absolutely withdrawn. And if it could be conceived that any Minister should come down to Parliament to propose that a portion of the ecclesiastical property should be appropriated to the erection and maintenance of Dissenting chapels, or the endowment of Dissenting ministers, he had no doubt that within a month every member of the House of Commons would be laden with more petitions than he could carry, and be overwhelmed with memorials and deputations from his Dissenting constituencies, entreating that they should be saved from this great humiliation and disgrace. What then was their object? As respected the Church, it was to release it from that entangling

alliance with the State, which, in their belief, and in the belief of many of its own members, fettered its freedom, compromised its dignity, corrupted its purity, impaired its efficiency, and gave rise to many occasions of scandal which brought reproach, not on the Church only, but on Christianity itself. As regarded the State, their object was to take out of its hands work not within its province or competence, embarrassing its councils, introducing an element of bitterness and animosity into the social and political relations of its citizens, and encumbering the Legislature with ecclesiastical measures which stood in the way of other more useful and necessary legislation. As regarded themselves, their object was to ask for nothing more—and they would be content with nothing else—than that they, as loyal citizens, and who would dare challenge the loyalty of the Nonconformists of this country?—(loud cheers)—shall be placed in a position of perfect and absolute equality with their countrymen of any and, of every other communion. (Cheers.) What was the state of their agitation? Were they making any progress? It was curious to observe the change coming over those who were called the leaders of public opinion, but who, in fact, might more fitly be called the followers of public opinion in regard to this matter. There were three stages through which every great agitation had to pass in this country. They had first to pass through the pooh-pooh stage. They were first treated with infinite disdain, as holding views too preposterous for serious discussion, the crotchets of impracticable and hair-brained fanatics. Their agitation continued for some years in this stage, but it had passed out of that long ago. Some of the clerical and Conservative journals still tried to repeat the cry of "pooh-pooh," but they did it with a very wry face. When attempting to sneer at them with a sublime scorn, they could only "grin horribly a ghastly smile," indicating a great deal of internal discomfort. (Laughter.) Most of them were wiser now than to attempt this strain any longer, and were beginning to recognise that the question of disestablishment and disendowment was now in the category of serious and practical questions. After the pooh-pooh stage, came the bow-wow stage, when everybody began barking violently at the agitators. (Laughter.) The whole vocabulary of abuse was then emptied on their heads, and they were called iconoclasts, revolutionists, socialists, robbers, &c. This was the stage to which the free-trade agitation had attained when the Anti-Corn Law League was described by a great London journal as "a society of impracticable fanatics, factious blunderers, and unscrupulous liars." They also had to pass through this stage. It would be curious and amusing, for instance, if they could collect the complimentary epithets and other pretty things that had been said of his honoured friend Mr. Miall. (Loud and prolonged cheers.) They were passing out of that stage also. Then came the third stage, when those who had most vehemently opposed and assailed the agitation came round, rubbing their hands and saying, "We always said it would come." One of the things marking this stage was the disposition to shoulder out of the way those who up to that time had conducted the agitation. Some of this class were saying to them now, "Yes, it is coming, the work of disestablishment must be done, but it won't be done by you." Well, they never expected it would be done by themselves. It was not the fashion in this country that those who sowed the seed should reap the harvest. The fashion was that the men who had laboured and toiled, who had borne the burden and heat of the day, when the time came for accomplishment would be brushed aside, and others would come in and wear the crown of glory. Well, be it so. They did not care much who gained the credit so that the work was done. In concluding, he would ask them not to be very violently discouraged, if the leading organs of the London press should be disposed to show them little favour, or even to treat them with ostentatious disdain. The influence of the periodical press was immense, incalculable, but not altogether omnipotent. Nearly all the great reforms that had been accomplished in this country for the last fifty years had been accomplished in the main by associations like this, with very little help from, and not unfrequently against the openly displayed hostility or scorn of the leading organs of the press. However, it was accounted for, the truth was that these great public instructors almost always looked with something of suspicion and dislike upon societies whose aim was by popular agitation to effect social or political changes. It was curious enough, that with such ample experience of what had already been achieved by these voluntary combinations of their countrymen, that they should still affect to treat them with contempt. The Catholic Association repealed Roman Catholic disabilities; the Anti-Slavery Societies abolished slavery in the West India Colonies with scarcely any help whatever from the press. In the United States this was, if possible, still more conspicuously the case. When William Lloyd Garrison—(applause)—began his agitation he had literally the whole press of the United States against him. The agitation was ridiculed by the great statesman Daniel Webster as a rub-a-dub agitation. Yet Daniel Webster lived long enough to acknowledge that the question raised by this agitation had become a question of supreme importance to his country. It was the Dissenting Deputies and Mr. Wilks's Protestant Society that carried the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and it was the Deputies and the Liberation Society that abolished Church-rates,

opened the Universities to the Dissenters, and if the testimony of Mr. Disraeli could be taken, disestablished and disendowed the Irish Church. It was the Anti-Corn Law League, whose operations were first obstinately ignored and then violently assailed by the leading London journals, that abolished the Corn Laws and brought in free trade. They did not underrate the magnitude of the enterprise in which they were engaged. They knew well enough the formidable nature of the difficulties they had to encounter. Let those who would stand aside, and let those who would sneer and scorn, some of them were determined to go forward calmly, resolutely—with perfect Christian charity he hoped—(Hear, hear)—and making large and generous allowances for those whose prejudices and susceptibilities were enlisted in favour of the system they assailed—but going forward with unfaltering purpose, determined not to cease until judgment should be brought forth in victory. (Great applause.)

The Rev. Dr. MELLOR, of Halifax, moved the first resolution as follows:—

That this meeting is glad to learn that, as the result of the increased pecuniary resources placed at their disposal by the liberality of the society's friends, the executive committee have been able during the past year greatly to extend the society's agencies, to arrange for an unprecedented number of meetings and lectures, and, by means of the press as well as the platform, to advocate the society's principles in almost every part of the kingdom. That the meeting trusts that the society's work will continue to be carried on with unflinching energy, and with constantly widening influence, until it has been completely and finally accomplished. At no period of the history of the society, said the rev. gentleman, had their prospects been so bright as at the present moment. Within the last two years, and notably since the accession to office of the Conservative party, a marvellous impulse had been given to the progress of their principles. Those of them who had been connected with the society for the last quarter of a century or more, remembered well when they were in the pooh-pooh stage—when they were an insignificant set of obscure, ignorant, fanatical men. At length, however, the time came for the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and then they found that this insignificant set of men had become the most powerful party in the realm, and they were told that the Liberation Society was the monkey, and Mr. Gladstone the cat's paw, in the whole of that operation. So they passed from the pooh-pooh stage to the bow-wow stage. Another step in the advance of their principles was taken early that year in the town of Birmingham, in a speech made there by one of the noblest tribunes of the people of England. (Loud cheers.) Mr. Bright had many advisers immediately after his speech was delivered. There was a marvellous appearance of wise men—(laughter)—he hardly thought there were so many in England—and they were all wise men of the good old type of Job's comforters, except that Job had only three, while Mr. Bright had at least thirty and three—all much concerned about his health, intelligence, and reputation. There came the *Morning Advertiser*, the *Bacchusite*; the *Telegraph*, the *Israelite*; the *Standard*, the *Gampite*; the *Morning Post*, the *Nothingite*; the *Times*, the *Everythingite*; the *Saturday Review*, the *Mephistopheleite*, and all informed him that he had said those things he ought not to have said, and left unsaid the things he ought to have said, and that there was no reason in him. (Great laughter.) He ought to have touched the labour question, the army and navy question, the education question, the sanitary question—in fact, any question except a State-Church question, and he ought not to have touched that. But John Bright had never been in the habit of consulting the editors of newspapers as to what he should say upon any great question which might excite the attention of the nation. He thought his own thoughts, and spoke them in his own words, and better words than not the editors of London newspapers could furnish him with for the purpose. He had even been the instructor of the *Times* and the editor thereof—the oracle which infallibly erred at the outset of every great question, and infallibly corrected its opinion afterwards. (Laughter.) All they wanted to assure their success was the determined opposition of the *Times*. It wrote thundering leaders against the Repeal of the Corn Laws, the Ballot, and every other great question; but it also wrote thundering leaders on behalf of them, and he should not be surprised if one morning it had another thundering leader announcing that the Liberation Society was "a great fact." (Loud laughter.) It would then condense into a magnificent leader, as though they were original, all the arguments produced for the last thirty years, and express its amazement that any man in the realm could ever have thought otherwise. (Loud laughter.) There were other signs of the times which should give them courage and confidence in the anticipation of success. He should not allude to them further, for it was his intention briefly to place before them one point, namely, the *laissez faire* shown by some Nonconformists, for they could not conceal from themselves that many faithful and intelligent men, both in London and in the country, were not with them in their organisation. They were fewer now than they had been, and they were likely soon to receive a marvellous impulse from the Wesleyan body. If the treatment they were receiving in many places, and the stir which even tombstones were making—(loud laughter)—did not touch them, he thought nothing would. During the past twelve months, however, he had not met with a single Wesleyan who was not heart and soul with them. (Cheers.) Some of their friends took this ground.

They quite agreed as to the undesirableness of an Establishment, and that the sooner it was put down the better, but they did not think the society's policy the correct one. They were of opinion that if patience were only practised the Establishment would destroy itself, that the intestine conflicts going on would eventually render it impossible for it to continue, and that by assailing it they would only bind the clergy and laity of the Church into a phalanx, and suspend the animosities and contentions which now prevailed. In answer to this he would say first that such an argument encouraged the opinion that they ought not to be reticent upon a matter of principle, and he ventured to say that the time never did and never would exist when a man who believed in truth ought to be reticent on a matter of principle. He did not believe in the intrinsic perishableness of any evil. He believed that evils were only got rid of by being removed, and that the men to remove them were those who believed them to be evils. A gigantic evil of this country at the present time was the drink traffic, and if they waited for its removal till the publicans met in the Agricultural Hall and put a stop to it, or restricted it, they would live to the age of Methuselah and yet not see it done. (Laughter.) Were not the Corn Laws an evil? Did they remove themselves? No, it was done by Bright and Cobden and their noble associates of Anti-Corn Law League. So with the Established Church, the men who believed it to be an evil must assail it until it was destroyed. But it was said "Are not you overlooking the divisions in the Church?" Well, there were divisions; there was no Church in the world where the divisions were so numerous and implacable, and he would go further and say there never was a Church which was so divided. Canon Ryle had declared that the divisions in the Church were so numerous that it was impossible for the clergy of the different schools to work together cordially for spiritual objects. Then in the name of God and man for what did they exist? (Loud applause.) The wolf of the *Church Herald* would not lie down with the lamb of the *Rock*, nor the leopard of the *Church Times* with the goat of the *Record*, and the cow of the *Standard* would not feed with the bear of the *Church Review*. (Laughter.) They had decisions about lights, incense, vestments, the north end of the altar, and the north end of the west side, standing with the back to the people, standing with the face to the people, and standing with the side to the people. (Laughter.) They had resolutions and prosecutions and allocutions—all in this Church by law established for the purpose of securing unity of doctrine and ritual in England—(loud applause)—and they had the Bishop of Salisbury refusing to sign an allocution because it said too much, and the Bishop of Durham because it said too little. Who, looking at the Church of England in the present day would say, "Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity"? (Cheers.) Did they expect disestablishment to come from the High Church party? Some of them, doubtless, were prepared for disestablishment, but what were they among so many? They were forbidden to use incense and sacrificial vestments, to burn symbolical lights on the altar, to mingle water and wine, and yet they remained in the Church. The cry of the Evangelical party was, "Stick to the ship," and their conduct showed clearly that they intended to swim with her, whether they intended to sink with her or not. They were the lineal descendants in point of doctrine of the noble men who left the Church in 1662, but logic had undergone a wonderful change since that time. Evangelicals declared now that they were the light, the salt, and the leaven of the Church, and that if they were out it would be left to darkness and death. Yet in the meantime the darkness and the death were coming on. He cared not for leaven that did not leaven, for light that did not shine, for salt that did not penetrate; and he looked with suspicion upon a logic that led to the conclusion that whatever the Privy Council might decide, however much it might tend to Romanism or Rationalism, they would never sound a trumpet of secession or disestablishment. (Loud applause.) The Church was a spiritual firm, and every partner in it was equally responsible for what was turned out. It would be no answer for a partner in a firm of bakers who sent out poisonous bread to say he did not bake it, that he did not approve of it, and that, in fact, he very strongly condemned it. The answer would be, "Sir, you belong to a firm and are receiving the profits of the firm—(applause)—and if you do not approve of what your partners are doing, you are bound as an honest man to come out." (Applause.) But would the Broad Church party disestablish a Church? Well, the Broad Church party was—the Broad Church party. (Laughter.) They looked for a halcyon time when all Nonconformity would be extinguished by becoming conformity. Many of them would welcome Dissenting ministers even now into the Church if they would but receive Episcopal ordination, and some were so generous as not even to insist upon enforcing that marvellous blessing. Even if they did not believe in baptismal regeneration, the real presence, the inspiration of the whole Scriptures, it was all right so long as they believed in the Established Church, or they believed in all these and a great many more. Very well, in addition let them believe in the Established Church. (Laughter.) "About many of these doctrines," said the Broad Churchman, "there is yet room for doubt, and about a great many more there is room for

charity, but without doubt unspeakable is the blessing of an Establishment. It is good for the laity, it is better for the clergy, and it is very advantageous all round to believe in the Establishment." He appealed to the Nonconformists, to whom he had been referring, to observe that there had been in the Church of England High-Church, Low-Church, and, for a certain period, an Arian party, from 1662 down to the present time; that the differences between the High-Church party and the Evangelicals were daily becoming more pronounced, and yet, with the exception of his friends Mr. Heard and Mr. Capel Molyneux—(cheers)—there was manifested at the present time no more tendency that way than there had been during the last hundred years. Where was the sign of dissolution from within? Nowhere. A body with privileges and monopolies like the Church of England never had consented to its own extinction, much less would they seek it. Mr. Gladstone did not wait till purchase had rotted itself out of the army—(applause)—or till the Irish Church had disestablished itself, but seeing that both of them were very slow to put knife to their own throats, he prepared the instrument by which he gave them the happy dispatch. This Church was as much theirs as the army and navy. The bishops were appointed by the State, the Prayer-book was the schedule of an Act of Parliament—not a single prayer in it could be altered without the consent of Parliament. It was an Act of Parliament Church, it belonged to them, and they were responsible for every evil in it, unless they were by their exertions trying to bring the evil down. Let them look fairly in the face the position they were occupying. If their principles were true, and they held them for true, then from time to time they became kings to rule them—not to be ruled—commanding them by tongue and pen and vote, to do all in their power to ensure their speedy and certain victory. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

Dr. LUSH, M.P., said he did not appear on that platform as a Nonconformist, but he did appear to express his sympathy with the great movement, and he would not apologise to them on that ground. This was an occasion upon which hard words were not required, and on which they were not called upon, because men differed from them in religion, to present the matter as one concerning a rogue or vagabond. In former days, as they knew, asperity prevailed; but in these days they felt less bitterly. He believed the principles of the Liberation Society were sound, and of a most satisfactory character, and he asked them not to be at all discouraged by anything that had happened, but to continue with faith in their work. It was not because the laity continued in communion with the Church that they sympathised or agreed with all the peculiarities of the clergy. That there were scandals in the Church there could be no doubt. But to what should these point? These things showed that even in the Establishment men desired to worship according to their own conscience, and he regarded it as rather a healthy sign than otherwise. He believed many of the clergy were most earnest and zealous in support of the institutions to which they belonged, but while they thus had sympathy with their own communion they were not insensible to the validity of the grounds taken by that society. There were others who would more ably explain its objects, and he would only now thank them for the kindness with which they had listened to him.

The resolution was put and carried, one hand only being held up against it.

The Rev. JOHN BOND, a minister of the Wesleyan Methodists, proposed:—

That the meeting rejoices to find that the tendency of recent events, in both the English and the Scottish Establishments, has been to create the impression that the time is approaching when those Churches must be disestablished and disowned. The meeting observes with satisfaction the altered tone of the members of the Established Churches, and of public men, in relation to the question, and believes that the changes to which it confidently looks forward may be effected as the result of a general conviction that they will prove advantageous to the Churches now established, as well as the general interests of the country. He was bound, he said, in the first place to ask the meeting kindly not to regard him as a representative man. He had been specially entreated to make it clear that he was not a representative man. (A laugh.) He was to be regarded as without father, and without mother, and without beginning or end of life. (Laughter.) He was pretty much in the condition of the Irishman who declared he had not been born at all but was washed ashore in a storm. Therefore they must not regard him as representing the body to which he belonged. He had not been sent there as a delegate or by vote, but he had come there from a conviction that it was high time that the body with which he was connected should take its place in that great national movement. (Cheers.) Every influence had been used to induce him to take care of himself in coming there. First of all it was said that John Wesley was the friend of all and the enemy of none. Was John Wesley the friend of infidelity? Was John Wesley the friend of Popery? (Cheers.) Would John Wesley, if he saw an incendiary going through the country, and endeavouring to destroy Gospel truths—would John Wesley say, Let us stand by him and spare him? Would not John Wesley say, "Take the torch from the incendiary and put him outside of the nation"? (Cheers.) There were persons who said that a minister had nothing to do with politics. He should be a soft, pulpy, molluscous animal—(laughter)—who could talk sweetly to old ladies and live perpetually amid the ambrosial breezes of heaven. Was John Knox a man of that

class? (Cheers.) Martin Luther, was he a man of that class? Was John Bunyan's great heart that of a molluscous animal?—(cheers)—and was Charles Haddon Spurgeon a molluscous animal? (Cheers.) Wherever he was wanted to put down wrong and set up right, there should be the Christian minister. (Cheers.) So long as a man was a citizen he had a right to perform the duties of citizenship. While they continued to pray for good government in this realm, it was their duty to use their best efforts to secure good government. It was said Christian ministers should take no political action. Did they not take action in connection with the abolition of the slave-trade, the abolition of Church-rates, the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and had they not lately assembled in Cannon-street Hotel to take part against a certain Contagious Diseases Act which had been presented to this country? (Cheers.) How were bishops and archbishops selected? Were they not selected on account of their political proclivities? Ah, but "political Dissent," you say. Well, there never need have been political Dissent if there had not been a political Church. (Cheers.) He was told he ought not to associate himself with the Liberation Society. As to that, as long as he found himself in company as respectable as that on the platform, he did not think he need be ashamed—as long as he found Mr. Richard, Mr. John Bright—(cheers)—Dr. Mellor, and Charles Spurgeon. (Cheers.) If he could sustain an Established Church, considered in the abstract, he could not sustain such an Establishment as existed in this country at the present time. (Hear, hear.) The whole country had been crying "shame" in relation to matters that had been perpetrated within its boundaries. Parliament had been occupying itself in relation to these matters until it had become quite tired. Events took place at the last general election which did not improve the hold the Church of England had upon the affections of the nation. The Church and beer did not go well together. (Laughter.) The potboy and the parson arm-in-arm did not seem quite right. (Laughter.) The pulpit did not stand well upon the beer-barrel—(laughter)—and a *Te Deum* seemed out of place in the bar-parlour. (Laughter.) The Church was in danger, and they called beer to the rescue. Well might they ask to be saved from their friends. It had been said that at the bottom of all mischief there was either a priest or a woman. (Laughter.) The last part of the remark everybody knew was a libel. (Laughter.) The first part was not quite so far from the truth as might be supposed. What had given in this country so much trouble in educational matters? The priesthood. (Cheers.) What was it created disturbances in parishes on the distribution of local charities but the priests? (Cheers.) Who were at the bottom of the troubles connected with the grammar schools and endowed schools? The priests. (Cheers.) Who had turned the burial-grounds into battle-fields, and caused a public scandal? The priests. (Cheers.) Who were those who so intimidated the farmers that they were afraid to carry out their own political convictions in many of the country parishes? (A Voice: The landlords.) Who were those who prevailed on the landlords to induce them to use this kind of influence? The priests of the Church of England. (Cheers.) Who were those who set the whole city of Exeter in a ferment from end to end about a paltry sum for dominicals? (Cheers.) He would not, however, conclude without recognising the goodness that existed in the Church of England. He could admire her learned theologians, he could admire her hymnologists, and he could admire her heroic martyrs who had kindled a fire in England that by God's grace should never be extinguished. He could admire her glorious evangelists that went from village to village, and could say to them "God speed, and may heaven bless you." But for all that he was not prepared to say the Church of England was an ark of salvation to this country. In that ark there might be Noah and a few good men, but there were a considerable number of beasts besides. (Loud cheers.) He did not believe in the Church of England being the bulwark of Protestantism. There was a time when, as Milton described, the Church with one foot strode across the sea, lifted its arms, and threw its power around the world, rattled its thunder at princes, and potentates fell down at its feet. It was such a power of which the resurrection was now being attempted. There were those in this country who stood forth to represent that power. One had been seen lately presenting himself in a new red hat and new red stockings. (Laughter.) The army which sustained this papal aggression came from the Church of England. Where did Dr. Manning come from? From the bosom of the Church of England. (Cheers.) Where did Lord Robert Montagu, the Marquis of Bute, and the Marquis of Ripon come from? These recruits did not come from the Baptists, Congregationalists, or Presbyterians. (Loud cheers.) They had come out of the bosom of the Church of England. There was a nest sheltered beneath the rock on which stood the throne. Out of that nest came those that twisted themselves around the freedom of the nation, around the legs and neck, and around the heart, and would, if possible, bring it down to that from which the people escaped in the dark ages through the blood of the martyrs. (Cheers.) The sneaks or snakes, or anything else in those nests, had a right to live, but the nest that was occupied by such should not be sheltered by the rock on which stood the British thrones, and it behaved them to roll back the stone, and leave the nest to

take its chance, with all that it contained. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. EDMOND said the part of the resolution to which he wished to direct attention was that of the Scotch Establishment. He had occasion not long ago, in the company of the secretary of the Liberation Society, to make a tour through Scotland, their principal duty and aim being to bring before the people of Scotland their responsibility for the State-Church of England. The one ecclesiastical measure of which the present Government might well be proud was one to strengthen the Scotch Establishment. It was to show they had been as free within the Church as they had been without the Church, and to make Scotland one real united phalanx of Presbyterians. Did the Government suppose they could win back the volunteers by this? He rather thought it was to bring back the Free Church, which took originally the same position towards the Church as the Wesleyans at first took towards the Establishment—holding the Establishment principle, but protesting against its abuses. The Free Church arose, however, from its torpor, and resolutions amounting to disestablishment were passed. Cautiously, as men who had to influence a great body, they gradually came to a position which amounted to separation from the Establishment. Many of the leading members of the Free Church of Scotland had taken up a position in the Liberation Society, promising that they should not all at once be regarded as true-blue Liberationists. They would remember that when Sir George Campbell, standing for the town of Kirkcaldy, declared that he was not in favour of disestablishment, they would have none of him—(cheers)—and if he had not capitulated and said that, though personally opposed to disestablishment, he would vote for it, he would not have been returned. What was that but a profession that the constituents of Scotland had made up their minds that the question was settled logically, and they meant to sit upon it. The impression he gathered at great meetings at Glasgow, Aberdeen, and elsewhere, was that the body of the people were in advance of their leaders, but the time would come when there would be no need of restraint, and then they would see what a charge of Scotch Christian men could accomplish. It was said that the Scotch Establishment was going to outstrip all other churches in zeal, activity, and success. Be it so; but they could not have an Established Church without restraints, and the more life there was in the Church the more tendency there would be to abandon these restraints. In Scotland, as elsewhere, there was a quickening of spiritual life, and he hoped they would soon get rid of those miserable mud walls of separation which existed between one church and another. (Cheers.)

Several voices in the audience having called for Mr. Miall, the CHAIRMAN said he was sorry to say their esteemed friend Mr. Miall was not in very good health, and had been obliged to withdraw.

The resolution was carried against one dissentient.

The SECRETARY announced that Mr. Hill, member for Worcester, would have been there, but was kept at home by indisposition.

Mr. CARTER, M.P., briefly proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman, to whom he said the society was much indebted.

Mr. CROSSLEY, M.P. for Halifax, in seconding the proposal, said they had had a noble meeting, and the speaking had been very much to the point. The chairman had done great service by the able statement he had made, to which they all listened with so much pleasure.

The vote of thanks being carried with acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN, in acknowledging the compliment, trusted they would all depart from that meeting stimulated and encouraged to renewed ardour and determination in accomplishing the work that had been given them to do.

The meeting then separated.

(From a Correspondent.)

There were probably about 5,000 persons present at the public meeting, held last night at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The audience was remarkable for the great predominance of men. Most of those who had attended the council meeting in the afternoon were present, and in addition there were Mr. John Crossley, M.P., Mr. R. M. Carter, M.P., Mr. Henry Richard, M.P., who occupied the chair, the Rev. Dr. Mellor, Dr. Edmond, Dr. Lush, M.P., the Rev. John Bond, the Rev. G. M. Murphy, Mr. Edward Spicer, Mr. James Clark, Mr. Arthur Miall, and Mr. Andrew Dunn. A loud cheer greeted the appearance of Mr. Richard, Mr. Miall, the Secretary, and others upon the platform. Mr. Richard called upon Mr. Carvell Williams to present, as customary, an abstract of the report, which was done with such a mixture of dignity and liveliness as to effectually disguise and make palatable the usually prosy character of such documents. The Chairman's speech, which followed, was one of the best which even he has delivered. Starting with the disclaimer of any hostility to the Church as a religious institution, he proceeded to state that the Liberation party was occupied by no selfish motives in the work, and drew down a most emphatic applause when he suggested what would happen if

any Government should propose to endow a Nonconformist Church. His reference to the loyalty of the Nonconformists met with such a response, that it seemed as though the audience would break out into "God Save the Queen"; but perhaps the most effective, as they were certainly the most humorous parts of his speech, were the "pooh-pool" and the "bow-wow" illustrations. Dr. Mellor made one of the greatest speeches ever delivered on the Liberation platform. His characterisation of the *Times*, that "infallibly errs and infallibly corrects," of the other London journals, and of Church parties, was exceedingly happy, but it was when he dealt with the objection of certain persons to take part, on Christian grounds, in this or any similar public movement, that the full force of the orator was felt. The great audience was swayed to and fro as a sea under a mighty wind, or anon it broke into sunny ripples of laughter. Dr. Lush, who spoke as a Churchman, spoke briefly, but with great earnestness and weight, especially deprecating any asperity in the discussion of this question, and pointing out the signs of progress in Parliament. The Rev. Jchn Bond, who referred to himself as a minister of the old Methodist body, addressed the meeting with great fervour and power. One of the best illustrations of the Church property question we have ever heard, was given by him in referring to the gardener's rake, hoe, and spade. Dr. Edmond was received as an old friend. His ardent address, and especially his assurance that the Scottish people meant to go through with the question to the end, were enthusiastically received. Mr. Carter and Mr. John Crossley spoke briefly, but to the point, and with their speeches one of the most successful meetings ever held in the Liberation cause came to an end. Those who read the speeches will not regret the length of our report.

CHURCH AND STATE ON THE CONTINENT.

In the Lower House of the Prussian Diet on Saturday the Minister of Public Worship introduced the new bill for the suppression of religious orders. By the first clause it is enacted that these orders are henceforth excluded from Prussian territory, and that existing branches must be dissolved within six months, except in the case of those engaged in teaching, for which the period is extended to four years. Associations which devote themselves to tending the sick will continue to exist, but they will be placed under State control, and may be suspended at any time by royal ordinance. The Emperor had given his preliminary assent to the measure before its introduction into the Legislature.

At the same sitting of the House the bill relating to the administration of Catholic Church property was read a third time without amendment.

Dr. Foerster, the Prince Bishop of Breslau, has been summoned to appear before the Tribunal at Birnbaum on the 13th inst., to answer a charge of having threatened to excommunicate a Canon Kick, and carried out that threat on the strength of the Papal Encyclical Letter of February 5.

The *Silesian Gazette* states, on what it holds to be trustworthy information, that the matter of the Prince Bishop of Breslau is not likely to lead to any serious trouble. The Prince Bishop himself is resolved to remain passive. If the Ecclesiastical Court pronounces against him, and decrees his deposition, he will—and only then—retire to the Austrian part of his diocese, reside at Johannishberg, and rigidly abstain from exercising his episcopal authority in Prussia. He will also, the *Silesian Gazette* is informed, petition the Pope to permit his retirement from the episcopal office. The vicar-general is understood to propose resigning as soon as the Prince Bishop is removed from office. The chapter are for the most part loyal to the State, and the *Gazette* has reason to know that they will elect an administrator of the diocese in obedience to the State laws.

The Bishop of Munster, on his return from prison to his episcopate town, was received by a deputation of the Catholic portion of the Westphalian nobility and a large concourse of the lower classes. The middle classes took no part in the demonstration.

Suffragan Bishop Cybichowsky, against whom the sentence passed on the 22nd ult. for illegal exercise of Episcopal rights has not yet been confirmed, has been expelled the province, and was conveyed by Posen police-officers across the frontier this day.

Fresh religious disturbances have occurred in Western Prussia, at Briesen, a town near Plunzitz. Herr Golembewski, the State-appointed vicar of Plunzitz, sought to obtain a lodging, his own parsonage having been destroyed last week by the mob, but nobody could be found to take him in, and he was insulted by the populace. His repeated appearance in the streets has caused a fresh tumult.

A bill determining the legal status of the Old Catholics has been framed by a committee of the Prussian Chamber of Deputies. It declares them entitled to share in the use of Roman Catholic

churches and cemeteries. In places containing several churches an apportionment may be made between the two bodies. Where the Old Catholics are in the majority they will be assigned the chief church, or have a right of choosing the hours when they will use the common church. If the holder of a benefice joins them he will remain in possession, and on a vacancy arising will be succeeded by another Old Catholic. Where there are several benefices, a division may be made on a vacancy arising in accordance with the relative numbers of the two parties. Other ecclesiastical revenues will also be shared according to numbers. If the Old Catholics become the majority in any place and the number of Roman Catholics becomes inappreciable, the former may have the full enjoyment of the revenues. Old Catholic congregations are permitted to form societies for religious purposes.

As a first measure of resistance to the end contemplated in the disendowment of the Catholic Church in Prussia, a wealthy Catholic in Silesia has left in dying his entire property of twenty thousand thalers for the support of priests deprived by the bill of their incomes. His relations and enemies are trying to contest the will, and the courts are called on to decide the case.

There was a debate in the Italian Parliament on Saturday upon the relations between the Church and the State. Signor Laporta, with whom the debate originated, found fault with the ecclesiastical policy of the Government, and declared that the superior clergy were violating the laws with impunity. This statement was denied by the Minister of Public Worship, who promised to bring in a bill for the administration of Church property which would afford just protection to Liberal ideas and the rights of the laity. Signor Minghetti, President of the Council, next addressed the House, pointing out that the Opposition had not asked that the existing Guarantee Laws should be modified, but had limited its criticism to maintaining that those laws had not been observed. On that ground he was ready to accept the discussion. He acknowledged that there was a conflict between Liberal society and the Church. In that conflict each nation should avail itself of the means offered by its traditions, its laws, and its interests. Signor Laporta having withdrawn the order of the day which he had proposed, the matter then dropped. On Monday Signor Mancini brought forward an interpellation respecting the relations between Church and State, and criticised the moderation shown by the Government towards the clergy. He cited several facts which he regarded as symptoms of conciliation, mentioning, among others, the case of the clerical journal *Frusta*, which ceased to appear by order of the Pope in consequence of its violent polemic against the Government. The speaker thought conciliation was impossible unless the State would accept the domination of the Church. He asked the Government to observe strictly the Papal Guarantee Law in order to protect the rights of the State. The debate has not yet terminated.

An Ultramontane paper, the *Unità Cattolica*, has published an article upon the installation of the Prince of Wales as Grand Master of the Masonic body, in which it identifies Freemasonry with Protestantism, and says they must both stand or fall together.

The Pope, in answer to a petition from millions of Catholics, lay and clerical, decrees a day of universal prayer for the 16th of June, the two hundredth anniversary of the apparition of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Alacoque. The form of prayer in the *Osservatore Romano* (the telegram says) obviously stigmatizes the Old Catholics.

A deputation has arrived at Constantinople to present a letter from Dr. Döllinger to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, inviting that body to send delegates to the Conference of Old Catholics which will be resumed at Bonn in the month of August. The deputation was well received, and four delegates of the Orthodox Church of the East will, it is said, take part in the deliberations of the congress.

It is probable that Dr. Wilson, of Dundee, will be chosen convener of the Sustentation Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, in succession to the late Dr. Buchanan.

FELLOWSHIP AT CAMBRIDGE.—Mr. James Rendall Harris, of Plymouth, who graduated third wrangler in 1874, has just been appointed to a fellowship at Clare College. Mr. Harris is an Independent, a thorough Liberationist, and an earnest Christian worker.

THE COLONIAL EPISCOPATE.—On Saturday the Rev. Dr. Samuel Thornton, vicar of St. George's, Birmingham, was consecrated to the Bishopric of Ballarat. The ceremony took place in Westminster Abbey; and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishops of London, Ely, Melbourne, and Goulburn were the officiating prelates.

INCREASE OF THE EPISCOPATE.—The Committee of Dissenting Deputies of the Three Denominations, at a meeting on the 20th ult., adopted the following resolution in regard to the measures now before Parliament for an increase in the Episcopate:—"That this body, while disclaiming all idea of interfering with the internal affairs of any Christian Church, or with schemes for the extension of its ecclesiastical machinery to be supported by voluntary liberality, are of opinion that the whole community has interest in any proposed modifications of a State institution, such as the Established Church of England, and feel called on accordingly

to protest firmly against the measures now before Parliament for the increase of the Episcopate in the National Church as fitted to extend evils in connection with a system to which, throughout its whole history, this body has been steadfastly opposed, inasmuch as the bishops to be created under the proposed enactments will be State officials, and entitled, in turn, to sit in the House as peers, like prelates at present on the bench."

CARDINAL MANNING was present on Thursday at the opening of a new Roman Catholic church at Pendleton, Lancashire, and presided at a luncheon after the ceremony. The first toast was "The health of Pope Pius IX." The cardinal, in proposing this toast, said His Holiness was in perfect health, and his recent illnesses had been but momentary and transient indispositions. The second toast was that of "Her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria." The cardinal said Her Majesty received the English monarchy in its full power, and would transmit it to her heirs more solid, more powerful, more widely extended, and more deeply rooted in the people's heart than ever. The cardinal subsequently declared that the Church's struggle was against the power of the world and the spread of infidelity, and not against any Government or any civil power. He gave a most emphatic denial to the statement that he had laid before the Holy See a "scheme for regulating the conduct of English Catholics in the coming struggle with the English Government." No such scheme ever existed.

Religious and Denominational News.

COUNTY CONGREGATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

The spring of the year is the time when most of the county associations in connection with the Congregational body hold their meetings. In one or two cases we have been able to give a full summary of the proceedings which have taken place. But the reports which have been sent to us are so numerous that a dozen columns would hardly suffice to do them justice. All that we can do at this busy season is to indicate a few of the questions of public interest that have been discussed at the several gatherings.

At the annual meeting of the Berks, South Oxon, and South Bucks Association of Independent ministers and churches, which was held in Broad-street Chapel, Reading, the Rev. E. Jukes, of Uxbridge, the chairman for the year, delivered an address in reply to the question, "What was their mission as Independents, as a distinctive body of religionists?" in the course of which he took a comprehensive survey of their religious position, surroundings, and duties, their relation to the Established Church, and their obligations as citizens and Free Churchmen. At the subsequent dinner the Mayor of Reading presided, and the public meeting was presided over by Mr. Alderman Andrewes. The Rev. C. Goward read some portions of the report, which detailed the work of the association, which consists of forty-three churches, only three of which were established before the present century. Mr. O. Brand then spoke on "The Spiritual Condition of our Villages." He showed that in the Cowleys, at Chalgrove, Horsepath, Hinksey, and other villages near Oxford, there was great spiritual destitution, and that Ritualism was being spread among the people. At Cuddesdon, where the Bishop of Oxford resided, the highest Ritualism was carried on. The college and the bishop in the village, which numbered 300 persons, were useless, except to propagate error. At the college images of the Virgin Mary were found in two or three rooms belonging to the students. The population of Oxford, including Headington, was 39,181; the Nonconformists had church accommodation for 4,900 persons, and only 2,100 used it. The Rev. J. Crowther spoke of "The responsibility of the churches in relation to village evangelisation." Ritualism was doing its greatest work in the villages. He had been described as a schismatic and heretic by would-be priests. A guild for girls had been formed at Hungerford; they were to copy the purity of the Virgin Mary; attend church on all feast days, &c.; and do their utmost to bring other girls into the guild. The Rev. T. Orr, of Windsor, in speaking of the latent power of usefulness in the churches, expressed his belief that Messrs. Moody and Sankey had recently done more real religious work than the bishops and clergy of all denominations in this country. Neither had been ordained, and their work was evidence that there was no such thing as Apostolic succession.

The Salop Association of Congregational Churches was held in the Abbey Foregate Church, Shrewsbury, the Rev. Dr. Brown, of Cheltenham, preaching a sermon. At the meeting of ministers and delegates, the Rev. W. R. Noble, the chairman, gave an address on "The purpose of God in the institution of the Christian Church." A resolution was passed, approving in the main, of the financial scheme of the Congregational Union, but suggesting "that the board shall consist of about double the number of members proposed for its constitution; and, further, with some urgency, that each county association shall be invited to send an equal number of representatives as members of the board, it being of importance that every district should be well represented by those practically acquainted with its necessities." At the pub-

lic meeting addresses were delivered by D. C. Davies, Esq., of Oswestry, on "The Country Minister, his Life and Work"; the Rev. T. Davies, of Wellington, on "The Church's Duty to the World"; and the Rev. Mark Simon, of Wollerton, on "The Philosophy of Christian Work." At a breakfast given next morning by the chairman to the ministers of the county, a paper was read by the Rev. T. Gasquoine, B.A., on "Our Ministry in relation to the times we live in." The paper was characterised by that penetration and perspicuity of thought for which the writer is well known.

The Cheshire Congregational Union meeting, held at Birkenhead, was presided over by the Rev. F. Barnes, B.A., whose address, on "Revivalism," adverted to the manifest signs of a religious awakening and to the importance of utilising it. Without some kind of restraint he thought it would, like all lawless force, in all probability do almost as much harm as good; but under prudent management and control it might grow in intensity, and by a leavening process must make itself felt to the utmost ends of the earth. The report, which was read by the Rev. T. Robinson, of Hyde, said that at Chester, Stockport, Marple, and other places, the churches had been visited in some cases with astonishing signs of the Divine power. The church at Marple had had between sixty and seventy applications for church-membership during the last two months. One of the churches at Stockport admitted over sixty members at one church-meeting. These were instances of a work that was going on with greater or less energy over a considerable part of the country. The large accession of new members had been chiefly drawn from Sunday-schools, and from those who had been regularly receiving religious instruction. Mr. Henry Lee, of Manchester, brought before the meeting the scheme for a General Board of Finance, and on the motion of Mr. G. S. Wood (Bowdon), seconded by Mr. Joseph Thompson (Manchester), a resolution was adopted with only three dissentients approving of the principle of the scheme without however accepting all the details.

The meeting of the Cumberland Congregational Union was held at Whitehaven. The Rev. J. M'Evans Scott, M.A., late of Blackburn, preached a sermon, and the business meeting was presided over by Mr. Jos. Brown, the treasurer. The report, read by the Rev. W. A. Wrigley, the secretary, said that they had only five instead of seven evangelists as formerly, and that the subscriptions had somewhat fallen off. The Rev. R. M. Davies, of Oldham, said that Lancashire had promised to give the Cumberland Union 200*l.* a year, for evangelistic work, if they would contribute a like amount. They had only contributed 137*l.*, but still Lancashire had given them 200*l.*, and if they would get up to 300*l.* he had no hesitation in saying that Lancashire would give them 300*l.* too. He contrasted the position of Congregationalists in such a county as Cumberland, where they were "mere Dissenters," with Lancashire, where a Nonconformist minister could take up his position with any dean or bishop. In most Lancashire towns the most liberal contributions came from Nonconformist churches. A resolution was carried, after some discussion, approving of the General Board of Finance, without committing the Union to all the details of the scheme. At the public meeting the Chairman (the Rev. R. M. Davies) spoke of the work carried on by Messrs. Moody and Sankey. He did not think it had touched the residuum in Liverpool and Manchester; but it had been the means of bringing thousands of professing Christians to decide for Christ. That, he believed, would have been achieved by ordinary agencies, but it would have taken a longer time. The Rev. A. Bell spoke on the work of a church in its own locality, and Mr. Common, of Sunderland, read a paper on Church Finance, in the course of which he said that at present there were not candidates equal to the wants of the churches. This was the complaint of all the denominations. London alone required 1,000 additional ministers, if they could only be had. After alluding to the fact that Christian ministers alone, with few exceptions, had not partaken in the general rise of income during the last twenty years, the speaker proceeded to say that in villages and rural districts it had been suggested that the minimum salary should be 150*l.* a-year, and that there should be a proportionate increase in towns and cities—say a minimum of 200*l.* or 250*l.* a-year. In order to accomplish this, he argued that it was the duty of every Christian man to set aside a tenth of his substance. He would do away with the pew-rent system and adopt that of free-will offerings by means of the weekly offering envelope.

The Suffolk Congregational Union met at Bungay. The Rev. Josiah Reeve, of Stowmarket, the Chairman, gave an address on "The Vitality and Organisation of Christian Churches." The Rev. G. S. Barrett, B.A., of Norwich, preached the Association Sermon at the Independent Chapel. The secretary of the Union, the Rev. John Browne, B.A., of Wrentham, presented the financial state of the society, from which it appeared that the funds were nearly 50*l.* in arrear. An effort was at once made to clear the debt, and before the meeting separated nearly the whole amount was promised. Discussion followed on the most effective manner of increasing the funds. It was resolved, if possible, to employ evangelists occasionally throughout the county, and to increase the colportage. A resolution was also passed approving of a Board of Finance "if practicable." A public meeting, largely attended, was held in the chapel in the evening, at which the Rev. Dobson presided, and the report read

showed the urgent need for the true Gospel teaching in many of the benighted villages of the county.

The Gloucestershire and Herefordshire Congregational Union held its annual meetings in Bedford-street Chapel, Stroud, the Rev. Dr. Brown, of Cheltenham, the Chairman, giving an address which dwelt upon the urgent necessity of the grouping system in respect to village churches, and the probable value of such mission weeks as were adopted by the Church of England by means of the combined action of Congregational Churches. A resolution was proposed by the Rev. E. J. Hartland, seconded by the Rev. G. Wood, and adopted, approving of the object proposed by the General Board of Finance, but declining to accept the plan in its present form. It was further resolved that no scheme would receive the support of the Union "which does not secure to local Unions, whether country or district, not merely the right of recommending grants of money in particular cases, but the administration of funds to be expended within their several limits." Dinner was provided at the Subscription Rooms, under the presidency of Mr. L. W. Winterbotham. In the evening a crowded public meeting was held in the chapel, Mr. S. S. Marling, M.P., presiding, and a number of addresses were delivered by the leading ministers of the body.

The seventeenth annual assembly of the South Staffordshire Congregational Union was held in Lichfield, the chairman for the year being Mr. W. H. Jones, ex-Mayor of Wolverhampton. Both the chairman's address and the report spoke favourably of the progress of Nonconformity in this division of the county during the past year. The Rev. T. A. Horton proposed in detail an amended scheme of church finance—the main features of which were that there should be a Congregational Board of Finance, that its object should be to aid in the augmentation of ministers' incomes on the recommendation of county associations, and not otherwise, and that the board should consist of 120 members, one-third, as far as practicable, ministerial and two-thirds non-ministerial members, appointed by the several county associations, in proportions regulated by the number of recognised ministers in each association.

At the meeting of the Derbyshire Congregational Union held in Derby, the scheme of a General Board of Finance was approved in general, and, at the suggestion of the Revs. J. B. Paton, M.A., and C. Clemane, B.A., of Nottingham, it was decided that united efforts should be made by the two associations with a view to evangelise the populous towns and villages in the Erewash Valley, on the borders of the two counties. Subsequently, the Rev. Goodeve Mabbs read an elaborate paper on the religious statistics of the county, dividing his subjects into the following heads:—What provision for religious accommodation does the county require? What accommodation already exists? By whom is it furnished? How distributed? What remains to be provided? What is our duty as a Congregational Union with reference thereto? How may that duty be discharged? In speaking on these points Mr. Mabbs read statistics which he stated that he had most carefully gathered from authoritative and reliable sources, showing the religious accommodation which was provided by the various denominations in the three political divisions of the county and in the town of Derby. He suggested the erection within five years of ten chapels in suitable places, a fund of 10,000*l.* being raised in three years to meet two-thirds of the required expenditure. He also suggested that efforts should be made in connection with all the churches to organise bands of local preachers to take part in mission work, and that arrangements should be made for the opening of mission rooms. Some interesting facts were also supplied with respect to the relative proportions of the Established and the Free Churches throughout the county, and in its respective divisions. After some discussion, it was resolved that the suggestions made in the paper should be referred to the executive committee for consideration. The thanks of the meeting were voted to the Rev. G. Mabbs for his paper, and the Rev. W. Crosbie and others expressed a strong hope that it would be printed, and might serve as a basis for future operations.

The Essex Congregational Union met at Halstead. The Rev. G. Wilkinson, of Chelmsford, preached, and the chairman for the year, the Rev. A. D. Phelps, ofCoggeshall, gave an address on the "True Unity of the Church of Christ," which was very cordially received. The receipts for the year were stated to be 819*l.*, and the expenditure a little short of that amount. The proposed General Board of Finance met with nearly unanimous approval, subject to the reservation of certain rights by the county association. A crowded public meeting was held in the Town Hall in the evening, addresses being given by the Chairman (the Rev. A. D. Phelps), the Rev. E. T. Egg (Woodford), and the Rev. A. Hanney, secretary of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.

In our number for April 21 we gave the resolutions passed at the meeting of the Kent Congregational Association. In one of them there was a slight error—the word in italics in the subjoined having been omitted in copying it out:—"And, further, this association would wish that one part of the objects of the board should be to aid small churches in defending their legal rights when endangered."

At the meeting of the Durham and Northumberland Congregational Association at Newcastle, Mr.

Henry Taylor presided. In the course of his opening speech he spoke of the disestablishment of the Church of England as a foregone conclusion, and in reference to the complaint that pure Christianity was making so little way, comparatively speaking, amongst the masses of the people, the chairman thought the reason was that Christians almost universally were living below the standard, which was the life of Christ. The great characteristics of the Christianity of our age, whether as applied to bodies or individuals, was in the first place selfishness, and in the second place worldliness. He did not think that thoroughly Christian men ought to be, so engaged in business that all their time must be given to the world, and that all their money and their capital ought to be so locked up in great schemes that they had not to spare to help God's work. The conference passed a resolution approving of the principle of the Finance scheme without committing itself to the details.

THE REV. J. W. KEDDLE, of Wells-street Chapel, Coventry, after a successful ministry extending over eleven years, has accepted a unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the church at Charlestown, Pendleton, Manchester. Since he announced his resignation, he has been urged, not only by members of his own congregation, but by leading Nonconformists outside of it, to remain in Coventry; but after the most earnest consideration he has determined to go to Manchester. The local press, representing various shades of ecclesiastical and political opinion, are unanimous in its expressions of regret at his removal. Mr. Kiddie succeeded the Rev. P. C. Barker, M.A., LL.B., now professor at Rotherham College.

BERKHAMSTED.—In consequence of continued ill-health, the Rev. Alfred Cave, B.A., has resigned the pastorate of the Congregational Church, Berkhamstead, much to the regret of his people.

THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION, as will be seen from the advertisement elsewhere, commences its sittings on Monday next, the Rev. A. Thomson, of Manchester, being the chairman for the year. It is possible that the Rev. T. W. Aveling will be nominated as his successor.

BOROUGH-ROAD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—The annual meeting of this church and congregation has just been held under the presidency of the pastor, the Rev. G. M. Murphy. It was stated that £4887. 12s. had been raised and expended in evangelistic and temperance work during the year, sixty members had been added during the year, thirteen had died, the number of members on the books being 407.

AFRICAN MISSIONS.—The vacancy in the East African Mission-field, caused by the death of the Rev. Charles New, missionary of the United Methodist Free Churches, will be filled by the appointment of the Rev. Mr. Brown, of Parkgate, near Rotherham, who, on the receipt of the sad intelligence of Mr. New's death, immediately offered himself to the Foreign Mission Committee, and was accepted by them.

MANCHESTER.—On Thursday, April 29, the congregation and friends of Rusholme-road Chapel at their annual meeting presented their minister, the Rev. Alexander Thomson, M.A., with a purse containing 400*s*, and a handsome Parisian time-piece, on the completion of the twentieth year of his ministry at Rusholme-road Chapel, in recognition of the faithful discharge of his duties, and of the unbroken harmony which has prevailed in the church and congregation during that long period. This gift was accompanied by the expression of the esteem and affection in which Mr. Thomson is held by all those who have witnessed his consistency of character, his unwavering allegiance to truth, and his fidelity to the duties of his high and sacred calling. They also desired in this way to commemorate the honour conferred on Mr. Thomson in his being chosen this year by the unanimous votes of his brethren in the ministry and the representatives of the churches, to fill the important position of Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.

THE CONGREGATIONAL LECTURES.—The last of the series of lectures on "The Atonement" was delivered by Mr. R. W. Dale, M.A., of Birmingham, at the Memorial Hall, on Tuesday, April 27. On this occasion, as well as at the preceding meetings, there was a good attendance. Dr. Allon, in moving a vote of thanks to the lecturer, said there had been a very masterly indication of Scriptural statement and argument, without too much of detailed exegesis, which had been done once for all by Dr. Pye-Smith. He thanked Mr. Dale for having supplied, not only another, but an additional investigation of this greatest of all themes, and he thanked God who had given their friend such endowments as enabled him thus to give expression to his views. (Cheers.) The Rev. J. G. Rogers seconded and the Rev. J. S. Russell supported the resolution, which was carried with acclamation. Mr. Dale, in responding, said that the question involved had a supreme interest for his own heart, and he had felt the necessity of arriving at something like an intellectual conception of the relation of the death of Christ to the forgiveness of sins. Whatever might be the measure of satisfaction afforded to others, he could say that he had himself found rest very largely in those views. The *English Independent* understands that arrangements have been made in regard to the Congregational Union Lectures for the next three years. In 1876 the Rev. Dr. Mellor, of Halifax, will discuss the question of "Sacerdotalism;" in 1877 the Rev. J. Guinness Rogers, B.A., will lecture on

"Church Systems of the Nineteenth Century;" and in 1878 the subject of "Christian Evidence" will be discussed by the Rev. Eustace Conder.

MESSRS. MOODY AND SANKEY.—The various meetings in Her Majesty's Theatre, in the Agricultural and Bow-road Halls, and at other places, have been carried on during the past week as heretofore, and with attendances more or less crowded. On Thursday evening a magnificently-bound copy of Mr. Sankey's hymns was sent to the Princess of Wales, with an address praying her to be pleased to accept it, and expressing a hope that some of the words therein may, through Divine grace, be a blessing to her and her royal family. Another copy, also richly bound, was sent to the Duchess of Sutherland. At the service at the Opera House, on Thursday, a large number of the nobility were present. The royal box was occupied by the Duchess of Westminster, the Hon. Lady Grosvenor, the Marquis and Marchioness of Westmeath, Lady Stanley of Alderley, and Lady Camperdown. Mr. Moody preached from the words, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth." Judgment has been given by the Master of the Rolls on the application of Mr. Leader to restrain Messrs. Moody and Sankey from continuing their services at Her Majesty's Opera House. His honour decided that the plaintiff had right on his side, but, seeing that to stop the services would injure the defendants without benefiting the plaintiff, and taking other circumstances into consideration, he would not grant an injunction, but ruled that the plaintiff was entitled to nominal damages, with costs, and stipulated that the defendants should undertake not to renew their engagement.

BOURNEMOUTH.—The recognition of the Rev. H. C. Leonard, M.A., as pastor of the Bournemouth and Boscombe Baptist Church took place at the newly-erected Boscombe Chapel, on Tuesday, April 20. The chair was taken by the Rev. R. Colman, secretary of the church and of the building committee, who said he had looked upon Bournemouth ever since he had known it as an eligible place for the formation of a good Baptist Church. The growth of the neighbourhood had been marvellous, the population having doubled in five years. The state of things in the Boscombe district, where they might read in the churchyard, "Of your charity pray for the soul of So-and-so, who died on such a feast. Jesu mercy! Mary help!" warranted their having planted that church, where the Gospel of immediate salvation for every believing sinner was faithfully proclaimed. They had in hand the draft of a lease for a new chapel in Bournemouth also, which they hoped to commence in about a month. Mr. Colman proceeded to express the hope that all would co-operate with their pastor to advance, not the interests of a sect, but the Kingdom of Christ. Mr. W. D. Thomas narrated the circumstances connected with the invitation given to the pastor, and with the parlour services held for eight months, to which he greatly attributed the large congregations they now had every Sunday. The Rev. H. C. Leonard said that the invitation had been unexpected by him. He had great pleasure in entering on his public ministry, desiring to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Addresses were then delivered by the Rev. J. B. Burt, of Beaulieu, the Rev. R. Caven, B.A., and the Rev. J. Bailey, B.A., of Weymouth. An effort is being made to clear off the debt upon the chapel, towards which a gentleman has promised 100*s*. on condition that the whole is raised by May 16, in order that the committee may be able to proceed at once to the erection of the Bournemouth Chapel.

MEMORIAL TO THE LATE REV. J. HUGHES.—On Monday there was, in Bunhill-fields Cemetery, an assemblage of ministers and others, friends of the British and Foreign Bible Society and of the Religious Tract Society, on the occasion of uncovering a monument which has been recently erected to the late Rev. Joseph Hughes, M.A., one of the founders of both those societies, and for many years the secretary of each. He died in 1833, and was buried in Bunhill-fields, and his name is inscribed at the bottom of an upright stone, which contains the names of several other persons, but the inscription is almost illegible. The monument is close by this gravestone. A temporary platform had been erected, and amongst those present were the Earl of Shaftesbury, the Rev. J. Stoughton, D.D., Mr. Joseph Tritton, Sir C. Reed, Mr. W. Hardcastle, the Rev. Dr. Davis, the Rev. Dr. Angus, the Rev. J. C. Harrison, and a number of others. The Earl of Shaftesbury presided. A hymn was then sung, the Rev. J. C. Harrison offered prayer, after which Dr. Angus read a statement of the life and career of the deceased. The erection of the monument was first suggested by Mr. W. Hardcastle, and the amount raised or promised was 180*s*. a sum sufficient or nearly sufficient, to meet the entire cost. This statement was supplemented by extracts from the first minute book of the Religious Tract Society, read by the Rev. Dr. Davis, the secretary to that society. One of these, dated 21st of December, 1802, stated that the secretary, Mr. Hughes, read a paper on the importance of forming a society for the distribution of the Bible in various languages, and that it was resolved that a meeting should be called to consider that subject. The assemblage was then addressed by the Rev. J. Carr Glyn, Mr. Joseph Tritton, the Rev. Dr. Stoughton, the Rev. C. Kirkland, and Sir C. Reed, the latter of whom reminded the Earl of Shaftesbury that a bill which had passed the House of Commons was taken into the House of Lords by his lordship, and carried through triumphantly, by virtue of which that

ground was secured for ever for the purposes to which it was now devoted. The monument was then uncovered. It is a handsome obelisk of grey and red polished granite, and it bears two inscriptions, one recording the name of the deceased and the offices he filled, and the date of his death, and on the other are the following words:—"This memorial was raised by friends who venerate his excellence and honour him as one of the founders of societies which have sent the blessed Gospel of Christ to millions abroad and at home."

Correspondence.

CHURCH AND CHURCHYARD—CONSERVATISM AND CHURCHMANSHIP.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—There is strong feeling and some indignation wasted by Churchmen upon the "Dissenters' Burials Bill." It might more reasonably be directed against a much worse thing within the Church itself.

I say "a much worse thing," not because I think the bill a good or legitimate bill, but because there is a grievance also connected with burial, inherent in the present condition of the Church itself, far greater and deeper and older than the grievance which the bill proposes to remedy, and which Church people would do well to apply themselves to cure first. They would then come with cleaner hands and a less-embarrassed conscience to the attempt to keep the churchyards to Church people.

The grievance I mean is the loss of all Church discipline. This is gone, except as against the clergy. There is some discipline among the Nonconformist bodies: there is no discipline worth speaking of in the Church: and so it comes to pass that there is not only no objection made to the use of the burial service of the Church in church and churchyard over the body of one of whose evil life all in the parish have been cognisant, and to whose repentance no man can testify, but the use of the entire service in such a case is demanded from the parish minister as a right, and the refusal of it is matter for proceedings in the courts ecclesiastical.

So long as Churchmen are content to see church and churchyard desecrated after this fashion, there is a good deal of unreality, not to use a harder word, in making so much of a grievance out of such interference with the freehold of the churchyard as is proposed under the bill. It may be very good Conservatism; it is certainly not Churchmanship.

Faithfully yours,

GEORGE A. DENISON.

East Brent, May 1, 1875.

A CLERGYMAN LOCKED OUT OF HIS CHURCH.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

SIR,—I beg to call the attention of your readers to the following paragraph, copied from the *Marlboro' Journal* of the 1st inst., as it raises a curious question of ecclesiastical law which may interest them, and also will very forcibly illustrate the state of feeling in this neighbourhood towards those who venture to sympathise with their poor labouring brethren in their endeavours to obtain just wages for their toil:—

On Sunday last a strange scene occurred at Coombe Church, near Hungerford, Berks, and one almost unparalleled, it is believed, in the history of ecclesiastical matters. During the morning service, while the Rev. G. Pearson, vicar of the parish, was preaching from the text St. John viii. 36, and setting forth incidentally the great advantages and beneficial effects that have accrued to the labouring classes generally through the instrumentality of the Agricultural Labourers' Union, as well as giving some good advice to the labouring people assembled, one of the churchwardens suddenly started from his seat, threw the pew-door open, and, on reaching the south door loudly called out, addressing the preacher, "I protest against the remarks you are making; you are only trying to get class against class. I am churchwarden, and I will look up the church, and no one dares open it but the bishop." All the people, men, women, and children, quietly kept their seats until the sermon and the service were over; with the exception of a farmer and his family, who, with great reluctance, followed the churchwarden, who had beckoned to them to quit the church with him. As soon as the hubbub was over, the vicar resumed his discourse, and was able to finish it without further disturbance. Not content, however, with what had been done in the morning, this churchwarden (whose power, however, is *nil*, inasmuch as he is the senior overseer of the parish), before the commencement of the afternoon service, while the bells were chiming, went and stopped the bells, turned out the clerk, locked up the church, and went away with the keys in his possession. The clerk, finding that the people, who were on their way to church, would be unable to enter the church, went and informed the vicar what had been done. The clergyman, nothing daunted, proceeded immediately to the church, and after a little difficulty succeeded in opening the church just in time for the people to assemble for the afternoon service. It is stated that portions, if not the whole, of the sermon preached on the occasion will shortly be published. The matter, of course, has been brought before the Rev. G. R. Portal, rural dean.

A correspondent of the *Marlborough Times* says:—"It is to be hoped that Mr. Portal will administer such a rebuke as shall be deserved to the vicar in promulgating his private views in the pulpit." The hope that a clergyman should hold two sets of opinions,

preaching the views of his richer parishioners, and stifling his own convictions of right lest it offend them, is so un-English and unmanly, that one wonders that any man should be found shameless enough to express it.

Trusting that you will kindly pardon me for trespassing upon your space at this season,

I am, yours, &c.,
AN ENGLISHMAN.

May 3, 1875.

EDUCATION IN THE RURAL DISTRICTS.

To the Editor of the Nonconformist.

DEAR SIR.—Some of your readers will recollect that in May last I made a statement at the meeting of the Congregational Union respecting the condition of our British School, as affected by the agricultural labourers' movement. Since then I have carried on the school on my own responsibility; but meanwhile I have been working to secure a school board, with what result the following narrative will show.

I may say that it was necessary to carry on the school in order that I might have a *locus standi*; otherwise we must have given up everything and submitted to be swallowed up by the National (?) School. Wrentham is an agricultural parish with a population of a few more than a thousand persons. This parish has been the battlefield of a conflict which will have important results not only in the immediate neighbourhood, but in rural districts generally. The opposing parties were, on the one side, three clergymen, almost all the farmers in the parish, the agents of a noble Liberal earl and of a Conservative baronet, and all whom they could influence; and on the other side, the Dissenters generally, and the members of the Agricultural Labourers' Union.

The immediate cause of the conflict was that, though more than three-fourths of the children in the neighbourhood were actually being educated at the undenominational British School, six or seven farmers calling themselves "the parish," in conjunction with the rector, resolved to refuse all help to the British School, so to compel its extinction, that all the children might be brought under clerical influence, and taught the servile and ritualistic doctrines of the Church Catechism. To ensure this result, and to prevent, as they thought, the formation of a board, within the last six months they enlarged the National (?) School at a considerable expense, so that it will now accommodate all the children in the neighbourhood.

The parents of the children naturally resented the attempt thus made upon their liberties, and in October last joined with the managers of the British School in sending a requisition to the local authorities to call a parish meeting at which a resolution in favour of a school board might be proposed. The meeting was held and the resolution carried; but the department in London declined acting upon it whilst the National (?) School building was in progress. When the building was finished a clear majority of the ratepayers (after a long correspondence) memorialised the department, requesting them to act upon the October resolution and to give Wrentham a board. They declined to do so unless another requisition was got up, another parish meeting called, and another resolution proposed and carried in favour of a board. All this was done; the meeting was held and the resolution carried in March; a poll was demanded by the opposite party which took place on Thursday last with this result: For a board, 95; against, 64; majority for the board, 31.

The results are—1. That, notwithstanding all the adverse influence used Wrentham will have its undenominational school. 2. The six or seven farmers have learnt that they are not "the parish." 3. Wrentham has shown the way in which other rural districts may obtain a board school if they will, even though the clergy and farmers have banded together to force a denominational education upon the neighbourhood. 4. The Wrentham labourers think that the education of their children is a matter about which they have a right to be consulted; and they will not tamely submit to have their own deliberate choice set aside and to have their children taught what the clergy and farmers please; and they invite their fellow labourers in the county to consider this question. 5. These Wrentham labourers mean to have some active share in the management of the school in which their children are taught and trained. Lastly. It is seen that union, common sense, and perseverance can do wonders even in rural parishes. A revolution has been effected in Wrentham—a quiet and bloodless one, but yet a revolution—and the discipline through which the men have passed has been most valuable. They are learning what is due to them, and are finding out how to obtain it; and by the time the franchise is given them, they will be prepared intelligently to exercise it.

I am, Sir, &c.,
JOHN BROWNE.

Wrentham, Suffolk, April 25, 1875.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.—In consequence of the great success attending the recent performances of "St. Paul" and "Israel in Egypt," at Exeter Hall, it has been decided to repeat those works on Friday, 14th and 21st inst. The principal vocalists engaged are Messdames Sherrington, Edith Wynne, and Patey, Messrs. Edward Lloyd, C. Henry, Hilton, and Santley. The band and chorus will be on the usual extensive scale, and Sir Michael Costa will conduct both works.

Epitome of News.

The Queen, with the Prince and Princess Louis of Hesse, Princess Beatrice, the Duke of Connaught, and Prince Leopold, and the Princesses Victoria and Ella of Hesse, attended Divine service on Sunday morning in the private chapel at Windsor. The Rev. Francis J. Holland, minister of Quebec Chapel, honorary chaplain to the Queen, preached. Her Majesty arrived at Buckingham Palace yesterday.

The installation of the Prince of Wales as Grand Master of English Freemasons took place on Wednesday at the Royal Albert Hall in the presence of several thousand brethren, every lodge in England being represented. There were deputations from Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, and the Grand Orient of France. Letters of congratulation were received from Genoa and Rome. The gigantic spectacle was admirably managed, and passed off without anything in the shape of a defect. A grand banquet was given in the evening at the Freemasons' Tavern in honour of the event. His Royal Highness the Grand Master presided. The Duke of Manchester, in giving the toast of "The Prince of Wales," remarked upon the gratifying fact that the Freemasons of the present day had, for the first time, among them the eldest son of Her Majesty and his brother the Duke of Connaught, whom all must esteem and love as the sons of a father whose memory was so fondly cherished by the people of England.

On Thursday Lord Carnarvon received a numerous deputation which urged the Government to annex the island of New Guinea to the British Crown. The noble earl pointed out that the acquisition of fresh territory was a very serious step, and one which no Minister would be justified in taking without carefully weighing the attendant circumstances. While there were many arguments in favour of the course recommended, on the other hand there were considerations respecting the character of the climate and the savage nature of the people, which raised grave questions of doubt, and these must have their influence in guiding the Government to a decision.

Mr. Baron Pigott, one of the judges of the Court of Exchequer, died suddenly of heart-disease on Wednesday last. Some few days before he was thrown from his horse and was recovering from the injuries he then received. He was to have heard the Norwich election petition.

It is said to be very probable that Dr. Legge, the well-known missionary of Hong Kong, will be appointed to the professorship of Chinese at Oxford. Dr. Legge is a native of Scotland.

Captain Boyton, it is stated, will make another attempt to cross the Channel on the 27th of May. He will start from Cape Grizanez and make for Dover.

At a meeting of the Committee of the Metropolitan Asylums Board a series of resolutions condemning the Mill Hill site for the proposed hospital at Hampstead, recommending that no fresh sites be considered, and suggesting an explanation that the hospital would only be used in cases of necessity, was adopted by 34 votes to 5.

While thirty-five men and boys were at work in the Bunker's Hill Colliery, North Staffordshire, on Friday, an explosion of firedamp took place, and it is feared that all who were in the pit have perished. The number appears to have been forty-three. All were shockingly burned, and some rendered unrecognisable.

At a board meeting of the Brighton Aquarium Company on Saturday the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench against their right to open the aquarium on Sundays was considered, and it was determined to make every effort to obtain the immediate repeal or modification of the Act under which this and other institutions are liable to such severe penalties.

The Bessemer saloon steamship will perform the service between Dover and Calais next Saturday in connection with a special trip from London to Paris. The return journey will be made on Monday.

About four thousand performers took part in the annual juvenile choral festival of the Tonic Sol-fa Association at the Crystal Palace, and the manner in which the programme was rendered won general applause from the vast number of visitors present.

The death is announced, at the age of sixty-nine, of Mr. James Allen Ransome, head of the firm of Ransomes, Sims, and Head, the well-known agricultural implement-makers. His remains were followed to the grave on Monday by the Mayor and Corporation of Ipswich, and a large concourse of the townsfolk, numbering over 15,000.

On Monday Professor Huxley, who has been appointed to take the place of Professor Thomson, of Edinburgh University, during his absence with the Challenger Expedition, delivered his introductory lecture to a large audience.

The election for the city of Kilkenny took place on Tuesday, when Mr. Benjamin Whitworth, the Liberal candidate, was returned with 290 votes; Mr. Dwyer Gray, a son of the late member, polling 120, and Mr. Marum 112.

The application to set aside the petition against the last return for Tipperary, on the ground that Mr. Mitchel was dead on the day the petition was presented, has been dismissed by the Irish Court of Common Pleas. The case will be heard before Mr. Justice Keogh on the 19th inst.

In the Norwich election petition Mr. Hardinge

Giffard, Q.C., Mr. A. L. Smith, and Mr. Blofeld will appear as counsel for the petitioner. There are about twenty-two cases of alleged bribery by money payments, and a number of cases of alleged treating and intimidation, but the bulk of the cases, about 600 in number, are charges of unnecessary employment. Mr. Justice Lush will try the case.

At a full meeting of the Victoria Philosophical Institute, held on Monday evening, at its rooms, 10, Adelphi-terrace, a paper, entitled "An examination of Professor Tyndall's Belfast address from a scientific point of view," was read by Mr. J. E. Howard, F.R.S. A paper, by the Rev. J. McDougall, on "Present Day Materialism," was also read. Several new members were elected.

FOREIGN MISCELLANY.

Throughout France preparations are being made for the general election.

The indications of the American wheat crop are said to be generally below the average.

Lord Hobart, the Governor of the Madras Presidency, died unexpectedly last week.

Sir Douglas Forsyth has been sent to Burmah by the Viceroy of India. An amicable settlement of difficulties is generally anticipated.

A Bombay telegram reports slight disturbances at Baroda. It adds that Luxmehai, the wife of the Quicowar, has been sent to Bombay.

According to a Vienna report, Don Alfonso, brother of Don Carlos, intends to leave Gratz, owing to the demonstrations against him which have taken place there. He will reside in Pressburg.

On the occasion of the Czar's birthday, the Emperor of Austria gave a banquet at Ragusa, at which His Majesty proposed the health of the Emperor Alexander, speaking of him as his "dear brother and friend."

A portion of the boat in which Dr. Rastoul and his companions escaped from New Caledonia has been found near Neumea, a fact which is believed to confirm the fears that the party have been drowned.

The Norwegian Storting has rejected by a considerable majority all proposals for the introduction of civil marriage, whether compulsory or permissive; even in cases where the persons marrying are of different religious beliefs.

The German war vessels Albatross and Augusta are to be recalled from Spanish waters. This will be done to indicate the satisfaction of the German Government at the reparation it has received for the Gustav outrage.

Advices from the Cape of Good Hope state that Sir Garnet Wolseley has been enthusiastically received in Natal, and that his speeches in reply to addresses have made a most favourable impression.

A miser and his wife died last week in the Auxerre, and on search being made in their cabin nearly 400,000£, principally in gold, were found. The *Continental Herald* says they were nearly ninety years of age, and lived on bread and water for a long period.

The Emperor of Brazil has commuted into one year of exile from the diocese of Pernambuco the penalty of four years' imprisonment with hard labour imposed by the district judge of Olinda upon Father Camille de Andrade, Governor of the Bishopric of Olinda, for disobeying the order to raise the interdicts.

OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA IN INDIA.—Accounts from Allahabad announce some cases of cholera among pilgrims in the city of Benares. In Oude a cholera panic prevails. Fearful accounts have been received from Cawnpore, Fyzabad, Jounpore, and Benares. The railway-train turned out eight corpses at Lucknow on the 8th of April. The Benares train, due at Lucknow on the night of the 8th, reached there on the morning of the 9th, having been delayed by frequent stoppages for the removal of the dead and dying.

THE BONAPARTISTS.—It is stated by the Paris *Echo* that the constantly increasing dissensions among the Bonapartists are causing great anxiety at Chislehurst. M. Rouher, the paper adds, has been sent for by the Empress Eugenie, who is anxious to know the actual state of affairs before proceeding to Spain with the Prince Imperial. M. Rouher is reported to give great dissatisfaction to the younger members of the party, and his friends say that he is tired out, and will give up the position he holds as leader rather than submit to interference.

A THEOLOGICAL QUESTION SETTLED.—The *San Francisco Alta* tells the following:—"A man died recently at Suter Creek who had never adhered to any particular belief in any specified system of religion, but who bore the reputation of being a liberal, kind-hearted man and good citizen. A minister was requested to conduct the funeral services, but the good man, during his discourse, said in effect that the deceased had not the least chance of salvation, but had made a bee line for the hot place. Those who heard this were very indignant, and that evening a party of men went to the minister's house, dragged him out of bed, and put a rope round his neck, declaring they would hang him. He begged hard for life, and finally retracted the aspersions he had cast upon the deceased, and promised to leave the place at once. He was then released, and the next day he packed up his effects and left."

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THE QUARTERLY REVIEW, No. 276, is published THIS DAY.

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CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.

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The FORTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING of the Congregational Union of England and Wales will be held in LONDON, on the 10th, 11th, and 14th days of MAY next.

Monday, May 10, at 6.30 p.m.—The ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING of the Union in the MEMORIAL HALL, Tea and Coffee in the Library, at 5.30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 11, at 9.30 a.m.—The ASSEMBLY in the CITY TEMPLE.

Friday, May 14, at 10 a.m.—The ASSEMBLY in the MEMORIAL HALL.

COMMUNION SERVICE.—There will be a Communion Service on the FRIDAY Evening in WESTMINSTER CHAPEL, at 6.30. The Rev. R. HALLEY, D.D., will deliver a preliminary Address, and the Rev. S. MARTIN will preside at the Communion. Cards for this service may be had on application to the Secretary.

ALEXANDER HANNAY, Secretary.

Memorial Hall, April 20, 1875.

COLONIAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The THIRTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING will be held in the MEMORIAL HALL, Farringdon-street, on THURSDAY, May 13.

The Chair will be taken by JAMES SPICER, Esq., J.P., at Half-past Six o'clock.

Addresses will be delivered by the Rev. E. Herber Evans, Carnarvon; J. D. Bevan, LL.B., London; Rev. W. M. Statham, Hull; Rev. J. J. Halley, Melbourne, Victoria; and Franklin Airport, Esq., of Camberwell.

ALEXANDER HANNAY, Secretary.

IRISH EVANGELICAL SOCIETY.

The SIXTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING of the Irish Evangelical Society will be held in the MEMORIAL HALL, Farringdon-street, on WEDNESDAY EVENING, May 12th, 1875.

The Chair will be taken by Sir CHARLES REED, the Treasurer, at Seven o'clock.

The Meeting, it is expected, will be addressed by Rev. Thomas Jones, of Swansea; Rev. R. Balgarnie, of Scarborough; Rev. S. Pearson, M.A., of Liverpool; Rev. Francis Tucker, B.A., Camden-road; Rev. Wm. Graham, of Carrickfergus; and Rev. A. Morrison, of Belfast.

HOME MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Instituted 1819.

The FIFTY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING will be held in the MEMORIAL HALL, Farringdon-street, on TUESDAY EVENING NEXT, May 11.

SAMUEL MORLEY, M.P., will take the Chair at Seven o'clock.

The Rev. Herber Evans, of Carnarvon; Rev. Robert Hamilton, of Brighton; S. S. Marling, Esq., M.P.; Rev. Dr. Parker, of the City Temple; the Right Hon. the Earl of Shaftesbury; and Rev. W. M. Statham, of Hull, have engaged to take part in the proceedings.

LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

ANNIVERSARY SERVICES.

The Directors invite the attention of the Friends of the Society to the following arrangements for the ensuing Anniversary:

MONDAY, May 10th.

Afternoon—The Annual Meeting of Directors will, by permission of the Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, be held in the Wesleyan Mission House, Bishopton-street, at Three o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, May 12th.

1. Morning—In Surrey Chapel, the Annual Sermon will be preached by the Rev. J. BALDWIN BROWN, B.A., of Brixton-road Congregational Church. Service to commence at half-past Ten o'clock.

2. Evening—In Westminster Chapel, the Sermon to Young Men and others, will be preached by the Rev. EUSTACE R. CONDER, M.A., of Leeds. Service to commence at Seven o'clock.

THURSDAY, May 13th.

Morning—The Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Society will be held in Exeter Hall.

The Chair will be taken at Ten o'clock, by WILLIAM MCARTHUR, Esq., Ald. M.P.

The Rev. J. G. Rogers, B.A., Rev. Dr. Wallace, of Glasgow, Rev. J. A. Maeddy, M.A., of Manchester, Rev. G. Cousins, of Madagascar, Rev. W. J. Wilkins, of Calcutta, and others will address the Meeting.

LORD'S DAY, May 16th.

MISSIONARY SERMONS will be preached on behalf of this Society at various chapels in London and its vicinity.

Subscribers' tickets for the meeting at Exeter Hall may be obtained at the Mission House, Blomfield-street, E.C.

ROBERT ROBINSON, Home Sec.

THE FIFTH YEARLY CONFERENCE of the MEMBERS and FRIENDS of the ENGLISH CONGREGATIONAL CHAPEL-BUILDING SOCIETY will be held at the MEMORIAL HALL, Farringdon-street, London, on THURSDAY, the 20th inst.

Chair to be taken at Six o'clock p.m. by JOHN CROSSLEY, Esq., M.P.

Tickets for the Conference can be had on application to the Rev. J. C. Gallaway, A.M., at the Memorial Hall.

MILTON MOUNT COLLEGE.

A BAZAAR in aid of the BUILDING FUND of the above College will be held at LEEDS about the end of JUNE NEXT.

Further particulars will shortly be announced.

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THE SEVENTY-SIXTH ANNIVERSARY of the RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY.

The Anniversary Sermons will be preached on SUNDAY, May 9, by the REV. C. H. SPURGEON, at the METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, Newington, Divine Service commencing at a Quarter to Eleven o'clock a.m.; and by the Rev. ROBERT MAGUIRE, M.A., in the PARISH CHURCH of ST. JAMES, Clerkenwell, Divine Service commencing at Half-past Six o'clock p.m.

GEORGE HENRY DAVIS, LL.D., Secretary.

ARMY SCRIPTURE READERS' and SOLDIERS' FRIEND SOCIETY, 4, Trafalgar-square, Charing Cross, W.C.

The ANNUAL MEETING of the Society will be held at WILLIS'S ROOMS, King-street, St. James's, on THURSDAY, May 13, 1875.

Chair to be taken at 3 o'clock, by the Rev. Bishop CLAUGHTON, D.D., Chaplain-General. Lieut.-Gen. Sir Arthur Lawrence, Gen. A. Clarke, Gen. Copland Crawford, Col. Field, C.B., Aide-de-Camp to the Queen, Rev. Canon Baynes, M.A., Rev. R. C. Billing, M.A., and Rev. E. L. Walsh, M.A., will take part in the proceedings.

Tickets of Admission may be obtained at the Offices of the Society, 4, Trafalgar-square, Charing Cross, W.C.

BRITISH SOCIETY for the PROPAGATION of the GOSPEL among the JEWS.

On TUESDAY EVENING, May 11th, the THIRTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING will take place in the CONFERENCE HALL, MILFORD PARK, Islington. The Chair to be taken at Half-past Six, by the Right Hon. the Earl of CAVAN.

The Revs. W. L. Rosenthal, LL.D.; Alexander Thomson, M.A., Chairman of the Congregational Union; James Culross, D.D., J. D. Bevan, LL.B., and other Gentlemen, are expected to address the meeting.

BRITISH SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE JEWS.

The ANNUAL SERMON on behalf of the above Society, will be preached on FRIDAY EVENING, May 7, 1875, in TOTTENHAM-COURT-ROAD CHAPEL, by the Rev. JOHN EDMOND, D.D. Service to commence at 7 o'clock.

NATIONAL SOCIETY for the PROMOTION of SOCIAL PURITY.

The object of the Society is—

To promote the practical recognition of the principle that the Law of Purity is of universal obligation on all men and all women alike, and thereby to counteract the causes of Prostitution.

A CONFERENCE will be held on FRIDAY, May 21st, at the FREEMASONS' TAVERN, Great Queen-street, London, W.C.

The Chair will be taken at Eight o'clock p.m., by W. SHAEN, Esq., M.A.

All persons interested in the subject are invited to attend.

JOHN JACKSON, Secretary.

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THE PASTORS' RETIRING FUND.

The ANNUAL MEETING of MEMBERS will be held at the MEMORIAL HALL, on WEDNESDAY, May 12, at 4.30 p.m., and not at 4 o'clock.

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The Nonconformist.

THURSDAY, MAY 6, 1875.

SUMMARY.

FINE weather and political dullness not seldom come together. Whatever excitement there is just now runs rather in the direction of social events, such as opening of the Royal Academy and of the Alexandra Palace, the unique sales of pictures and rare china, and the anniversary meetings that excite more interest than usual and crowd our columns. To the sententious description given by our Parliamentary correspondent of the course of the conflict over the Irish Peace Preservation Bill we have nothing to add, save that on one or two occasions the persistent Irish Brigade has been once or twice assisted by the front Opposition bench, notably in the attempt to alter the time of prolonging the Acts from five to three years (which was rejected by 230 to 144) votes; that the continuous absence of members nearly on one occasion led to a defeat of the Government; and that ministers have made a few concessions to Mr. Butt and his friends without getting any equivalent return. When the committee is resumed to-night, Clause 5 will still have to run the gauntlet of some half-dozen amendments before it can be passed.

The Government, though embarrassed by these tactics, are not yet despairing. They have got the Artisans' Dwellings Bill safe through the Commons, and Mr. Cross has seen his way to promise the introduction of measures, after the Whitsuntide recess, for increasing the penalties of brutal assaults, and for amending the law of masters and servants. But the Budget awaits the pleasure of the Irish members. When they have exhausted their powers of resistance, there is to be a grand field-day for the discussion of Sir Stafford Northcote's financial scheme, in which Mr. Gladstone will take part; the immediate question at issue being raised by Mr. Fawcett on a resolution condemning the evasive policy of the Government on the subject of local taxation.

To the many blunders of Mr. Disraeli this session must be added his treatment of the privilege question. The resolutions proposed by the Marquis of Hartington—which, in effect, provided that the House of Commons should reserve to itself the right of excluding reporters and strangers rather than leave it to the caprice of individual members—have generally been accepted out-of-doors as a reasonable solution of the difficulty. But the Premier objected to any action being taken on the irrelevant plea that the privileges of Parliament were too valuable to be tampered with, and the excuse that the standing order on the subject worked fairly well. Mr. Sullivan, however, supplied an instant test of the fallacy of this declaration by calling attention to the presence of strangers in the House. For an hour or two there was a secret session, in the course of which there was some exciting talk. Mr. Disraeli at length did what he should have done before, *viz.*, promised that the Government would take the matter in hand before the adjourned debate on the 25th of May.

The ardent supporters of annexation to the British Empire are somewhat in haste. Scarcely has Fiji been added to our dependencies, than a deputation has waited on Lord Carnarvon to urge that New Guinea, opposite to the northern shores of Australia, should be added to our colonies, on the somewhat weak ground that other Powers may step in and take what we refuse, and thus become a perpetual menace to our great dependencies in the South Seas. But, as his lordship says, this is more an Australian than an English question, and he has received no pressing memorials from that quarter. Nor has our management of native races been so satisfactory as to make it desirable that we should include the Papuans among them. At the same time, Lord Carnarvon seems, as in the case of Fiji, to invite more pressure, and then New Guinea will be swallowed. We doubt if the missionaries settled there would rejoice at such a consummation.

Save some preparations in the departments for the general elections both for the Senate and a fresh Chamber of Deputies, there is an absolute calm in France. In Spain also the truce in the north is hardly broken, though the Carlists boast of some new successes over the Alfonsists. But these war bulletins are manufactured rather for effect than to tell the unvarnished truth.

Prince Bismarck declines to rest on his oars. The bill for suppressing religious orders has been brought into the Prussian Diet, but its severity has been somewhat mitigated through the influence of the Empress—the religious communities which devote themselves exclusively to the sick being allowed a long respite. The measure for disendowing the Roman Catholic clergy has become law, and the Falk Laws are being enforced with unflinching vigour; prelates being as little spared as common priests.

EARL RUSSELL ON GERMANY AND BELGIUM.

WE may as well admit at once, as we have had occasion to do before now, that we do not admire Earl Russell's spirit in relation to the international policy of this country. Age does not appear to mellow him in this respect. He has a propensity to venture upon dangerous places. He is given to meddling with the affairs of neighbouring nations. He does not seem to appreciate the temptation which he offers such nations to resent his interference as impudent. The noble earl's motives are doubtless good, and arise out of the intensity of his patriotism. But it is not every one whose motives will bear the strictest examination that habitually acts wisely in his attempt to express them. We fear that to Earl Russell's temperament in this regard the Crimean war must be largely ascribed, and that the irritation of the Government of the United States of America, which ultimately led to the

Washington Treaty, was excited by his conduct as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He is, perhaps, as perfect a type of British pugacity in bygone times as still survives in these more modern days. He never hears of a difference, be it great or small, between European Governments, but he is forthwith prompted to intervene—sometimes by unasked-for advice, sometimes by unwelcome remonstrance, sometimes by sudden acts the wisdom of which subsequent evils fail to justify. As a firm friend and active promoter of reform and civil and religious liberty in days when they found few friends in influential quarters, Lord Russell is entitled to our grateful recollections. In regard to domestic politics, his active mind, notwithstanding the advance of his years, contrives to keep abreast of the movements of the age. But it must, we think, be admitted even by his warmest friends, that in regard to England's foreign relations, we will not say his policy, but his modes of giving effect to it, are, as was witty and aptly described by the late Lord Derby, "meddle and muddle."

On Monday night Lord Russell thought fit to bring before the House of Lords, for a second time, the recent diplomatic correspondence between Germany and Belgium. There does not appear to have been any perceptible reason for his asking for copies of that correspondence, unless it were that it is still incomplete. We think we have already described the nature of the request which the Government of Germany has, in friendly terms, put before that of Belgium. It amounts to this—that if the existing municipal law of Belgium will not authorise the suppression of offences committed in that country against the peace and amity of neighbouring nations with whom its relations are friendly, it should recognise the obligation of altering them. The question is one of great delicacy, and one the satisfactory settlement of which must obviously be interesting to England, one of the Powers by which the neutrality of Belgium is guaranteed. But, in the first place, the papers asked for by Earl Russell of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, are, as he said, not his to give. They have been communicated to him by the German Ambassador in confidence for the present. They will shortly be laid before the Belgian Chamber, when a debate will take place upon the subject matter which they embody. They will then be fairly open to the discussion of other Legislatures, as well as to the consideration of other Governments. There is no need for haste. It is but fitting that Belgium should, according to the homely phrase of Lord Derby, "be left to tell her own story." She has not called upon any of the guaranteeing Powers for protection. She is justly jealous of her own independence, and she has not complained of being incompetent to manage her own affairs. Meanwhile, Lord Derby assured the House of Lords that the last note of the German Government to that of Belgium is not unfriendly in its character, and has nothing in it in the nature of menace, and he concluded his brief reply to the noble earl by declaring that he "did not think any advantage could be gained for the good relations between those two countries, or for the peace of Europe generally, by volunteering at this stage an uncalled-for interference in a case which has only been partly heard."

We sincerely regret that Earl Russell should have put himself in the way to receive so appropriate and dignified a rebuke. We are very far from assuming that the policy suggested by Prince Bismarck to Belgium is worthy of approval. There may be, we admit, some call on the constitutional States of Europe to modify, to some extent, the laws by which they guide the discharge of their duties in their relationships one to another. The present attitude of the Papacy towards them has, to a certain extent, rendered it necessary for them to alter, within well-defined limits, the municipal provisions intended to prohibit the conspiring of one Government against another upon the territory of Powers with which they are in amity. But this is a work to be undertaken at leisure, and with a cautious regard to the sentiments and circumstances of the particular nation which it may affect. We, for example, could hardly consent to shield Germany from Ultramontane attacks made upon her in England, by assimilating our laws to hers in the limitation of religious liberty. We have no right, however, to tamper with Belgian independence. She may see reason, or she may not, to comply with the suggestion made by Germany, wholly, or in part. She may, or she may not, consider that the character of her municipal law lays her open to complaint from the German Government. Leave her to judge for herself. Leave Germany also to judge what it is proper to ask. There is no probability that our interference in

the matter would be productive of anything but embarrassment. It is a great point of wisdom to understand when and where to hold one's tongue. If Earl Russell were a younger man he might, perhaps, usefully study that point, both in its theory and its application.

AN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNOR ON THE COLONIES.

THE increased interest which the people, as well as the governing classes of England, have lately taken in the colonies, and in colonial questions, could not be better illustrated than by reference to the banquet which was given last week to Sir George Bowen, Governor of Victoria. We know of no domestic question which would have drawn together a larger number of representative men of all parties and pursuits, and although the primary object of the gathering was to pay a tribute of respect to a gentleman who, for sixteen years, has administered in succession the affairs of three of the greatest colonies of England, it cannot be doubted that the assembly was also moved by a desire to uphold the integrity of the Empire. A passionate love of dominion for its own sake is certain to provoke that cruel lust of conquest which has stained the history of so many great empires besides our own, but if it be subordinated to the interests of civilisation and Christianity, it may enable a nation to realise a noble destiny. It is true that many chapters of our colonial history are disfigured by events which we cannot recall without feelings of shame and regret, but, on the other hand, there has been of late years a greater approach towards that ideal which it should be the object alike of statesmen, of missionaries, and of colonists to keep steadily in view. Greatly to their surprise, the authorities of Natal have been taught that Kaffirshaverights which even Europeans are bound to respect. The celebrated dictum of the late Chief Justice Taney has also been reversed in the Pacific. Fiji is annexed that slave-traders may be brought within wholesome reach of British law; and if, as appears probable, our authority is soon to be asserted in the waters of New Guinea, it will only be because Lord Carnarvon is anxious to prevent the excesses of kidnapping captains and of lawless gold-diggers.

But this is a long digression, and there are ample materials for comment in Sir George Bowen's interesting review of the colony of Victoria. He claims for his colony that it vies with Canada for the honour of being "the blue ribbon" of the colonial service. Only forty years ago and its ample territory was a desolate waste, inhabited only by a few wandering tribes of Papuans. Now Victoria has a yearly revenue of four millions and a-half sterling, and an aggregate import and export trade of the annual value of thirty-two millions sterling, nearly equal to that of the Dominion of Canada, and actually exceeding that of Portugal, Denmark, and Saxony. Melbourne, in point of population, is the ninth city in the British dominions; and Sir G. Bowen refers, not without a just feeling of pride, to the fact that, long before household suffrage, vote by ballot, the simplification of land transfer, and the admission of women to the universities had been introduced into England, these and kindred reforms were flourishing in the colony of which he is now the governor. If the occasion had permitted the introduction of a controversial element, he might have called the attention of his audience to the existence in Victoria of the principle of religious equality, and he might also have shown them that the withdrawal of ecclesiastical endowments and of a State-paid clergy had not impaired the vitality of either church or chapel. Ten years ago a speaker at such a meeting would have been thought equally wanting in good taste if he had referred to such burning questions as vote by ballot or household suffrage. Who knows but in ten years' time a future Governor of Victoria—or of the united colonies of Australia—may be able to boast before a London audience that religious equality, as embodied in statutes of the English Parliament, is really an importation from the antipodes. Sir George Bowen made the remarkable statement that one-third of the revenue of the colony is applied to purposes of public instruction. The educational vote of the Victoria Parliament covers the whole ground of intellectual teaching, from primary schools to universities, and from free libraries for the people to picture galleries, and schools of art and mining. Could better proof be given of the fact that a popular Government may be trusted to educate the masses whom it rules, and whose sense of the value of efficient instruction is, indeed, the motive power from which colonial statesmen draw their educational

energy and zeal? The Democratic Government of Victoria is only doing what the Democratic Government of the United States has done for generations—that is to say, out of the raw material supplied by innumerable ship-loads of emigrants it is endeavouring to fashion communities of Englishmen, who are fit to be citizens of a free state as well as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Sir George Bowen touched upon the future, but with a light and cautious hand. Those who think that at no distant day the Australian colonies will be united in a confederation, reckon without their host. According to the latest authority, it is even possible that these colonies may prefer for an indefinite period to revolve like planets, each in its own separate orbit. Sir George is probably right in believing that an Australian Zollverein must precede an Australian Bund, and that any change in the existing system must be the fruit, not of philosophical theories, but of the urgently-felt needs of the population. Owing to the exceptional good fortune of their geographical position, the Australian colonies are able to exercise, unfettered, the right of choice. No jealous Republicans dwell on their borders, watching them as the Americans watch the Canadians. Sir Henry Rawlinson lately remarked that "Russians, Germans, and Italians are all now nibbling at New Guinea," but for generations to come it is practically impossible for any rival or hostile Power to establish itself in dangerous proximity to the Australian Continent. Even if it were possible for a foreign State to annex territory in that region, it would require the genius of a colonising nation to people it with vigorous and enterprising communities; and the politics of Europe must wear an aspect very different from that which they now present, before Russia, or Germany, or Italy, is in a position to found in any part of the world colonies which would prove rivals of Victoria or New Zealand. We do not believe that anything would be gained by forcing on confederation in Australia. When it comes it must be the result of a natural and not an artificial growth. Like the last remaining link of telegraphic communication between England and New Zealand, which will be formed within the next twelve months, it must spring out of the proved necessities of the time. But when Australia is ripe for it, and the new relation is happily cemented, she will take her place among the foremost nations of the world, for already her aggregate trade is valued at ninety millions sterling per annum, while her aggregate public revenue amounts to fourteen millions. Instead of confederation leading to separation from England, we believe it is perfectly compatible with even the increased unity and consolidation of the empire; and, for aught we can see to the contrary, it may actually pave the way for the establishment of a Federal bond between the mother country and her colonies, and also for the readjustment of our expenditure for Imperial purposes on equitable principles.

SKETCHES IN PARLIAMENT.

(From our Correspondent in the Gallery.)

Debates on Irish affairs are to the House of Commons much the same as salt is to the porridge, or perhaps more precisely, as pepper is to the pie. But for Major O'Gorman and his compatriots the House would, especially in these times, be a dull place. But we may have too much of a good thing, and though partridge is very well on the dinner-table as an occasional course, *toujours perdrix* is, proverbially, an undesirable arrangement. For the past week we have had "always Ireland" and it has been just a little too much. At the same time it is only fair to admit that the obstructiveness of the Irish members has not been wholly factious. They have just grounds for complaint in the manner in which the Peace Preservation Bill has been drawn up, and if the Government had, upon the inconsistencies and awkwardnesses of the bill being shown, frankly withdrawn it and introduced a simpler and equally effective measure, it would have been better for them and for Parliament, which latter is now threatened with morning sittings, and with a curtailment of its holiday, all because the Irish members, being driven and pushed forward two paces, systematically retrace one and a-half. For the most part the debates have been carried on between Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, on the one side, and the Home-Rule party on the other, and on the whole, it has been a struggle in which conspicuous ability has been displayed. Sir M. Hicks-Beach has been tireless in his attendance, and ready in his replies, and on the side of the Irish Mr. Butt, with his weighty legal knowledge and his Parliamentary experience, and Mr. Sullivan, with his bright quick insight, with

his argument, his tact, and his eloquent tongue, have worthily upheld the reputation of Ireland. It is not from the leader of Home-Rulers, or his lieutenant, that the sort of obstruction comes which disgusts English members, and drives the Government mad. These two honourable members are open to give and take in argument, and are chivalrous enough to acknowledge defeat. It is men like Mr. Biggar, Mr. Callan, Sir Joseph M'Kenna, and Mr. Ronayne that, by force of prevailing numbers, unfortunately give the stamp of character to a section of the House which is not less able, less respectable, and less worthy of consideration than any of the others into which Parliament is broken up.

The front Opposition bench, generally bare during the debates, has occasionally filled up and asserted itself. There was one notable fight over the date to which the bill was to extend. The Government proposed that it should remain in force to the year 1880. Several amendments reducing the period were placed upon the paper by the Irish members, but finally Captain Nolan's (proposing that the duration of the bill be limited to two years) was accepted by the Opposition, and pressed upon the Government. Both Sir W. Harcourt and Mr. Gschchen spoke; a good deal being made of the suggestion thrown out that the Ministry were keeping in view the probable length of their retention of office, and were so arranging matters that this troublesome question might not crop up again in their day. Of course Sir Michael Hicks-Beach indignantly resented this insinuation, and hereupon the whole aspect of debate changed. Sarcasms were bandied backwards and forwards between the two front benches, while the Home-Rulers rested on their oars and enjoyed the little diversion. It is, by the way, one of the indications to prove the existence of some discipline and a guiding hand in the Home-Rule party, that whenever, as on this occasion, their cause is taken up by the leaders of the Opposition, they are content to play the part of silent lookers-on.

The morning sitting of Friday did not greatly advance matters, and when at seven o'clock, after five hours' steady work, progress was reported, the committee was still on the Clause 3, which it had spent the whole of Monday night and of Thursday night in discussing. It was intended to have resumed the committee at the evening sitting, and there was even some talk of a Saturday sitting, to push it through. The resumption at the evening sitting was actually arranged, private members having business on the paper having, with the exception of Mr. Butt, bartered their rights. Mr. Butt stood first with a motion about the Irish College at Paris, and it was intended that as soon as this was disposed of the committee should be resumed. But the programme was suddenly changed, and it is whispered that the alteration was not altogether disconnected from information received by Mr. Disraeli of the intentions of the Opposition—intentions forecasted in the notice given by Mr. Fawcett of his resolution to transfer to the Public Works Loan Bill his motion raising the question of local taxation, which he had originally proposed to move on going into committee on the Budget resolutions. There had, the Government learnt, been a meeting that very day at Earl Granville's, at which it was settled that Mr. Gladstone was to reappear in the Parliamentary field, and lead a combined attack on the Government in the vulnerable question of its financial policy. The effect of relentlessly hastening on the Coercion Act would, in the first place be so deeply to offend the Home-Rulers that they would be thrown into the arms of the Opposition; and, in the second place, to bring on Monday a debate for which the Opposition were prepared and eager, whereas it would be well for the Ministry to gain a little time to marshal their forces and furbish up their arms. Accordingly, towards six o'clock, the proposal was rearranged, the committee was, on progress being reported, adjourned to Monday; and when at nine o'clock the sitting was resumed, "the orders," as originally planned, were sleepily gone through.

* On Monday night the discussion on the Peace Preservation Bill was resumed, and continued amid unmistakeable signs of weariness on the part of the committee. Even the Home-Rule members, who have fought a good fight, seemed to have wearied themselves out, and at times there were scarcely enough present to carry on the debate. At one time Mr. Butt was absent when he should have been there to move an amendment, and in this crisis Mr. Biggar, who is blowing himself out in a really alarming manner since he made that four hours' speech, came to the front and talked some unintelligible stuff for a quarter-of-an-hour

necessary to bringing up Mr. Butt. Mr. Biggar has two special advantages for this sort of exercise. In the first place, no one listened to him, and in the second place, very few that did could gather his meaning. Quite apart from the cloudiness of the hon. member's mental vision, he is gifted with a most remarkable voice which in some strange way sinks those syllables, the full enunciation of which is necessary to the intelligible utterance of what pass with him for thoughts.

The debate was resumed at a morning sitting on Tuesday, with some hope of the conclusion being reached before seven o'clock, when the sitting would, perforce of the standing orders, be suspended. But this hope was speedily disappointed, and it was made clear before five o'clock that a further adjournment would be necessary. As a matter of fact, the committee got through five amendments in the course of its five hours' sitting, leaving eight for settlement this day (Thursday). At the evening sitting the Marquis of Hartington brought in his series of resolutions affecting the relations between Parliament and the Press. Matters proceeded quietly enough till Mr. Lowe got up, and made a trenchant speech in reply to Mr. Disraeli, who had been arguing—successfully, judging by the cheers from behind the Treasury Bench—that, on the whole, the existing rule with respect to the presence of reporters worked exceedingly well, and that if it ever broke down the House had within its own hands a complete and sufficient remedy. Mr. Gathorne Hardy was proceeding to answer Mr. Lowe, when Mr. Sullivan, amid loud cheers from the Liberals, gave a practical illustration of the admirable way in which the system eulogised by the Premier worked, by "spying strangers." A scene of some confusion followed, amid which "strangers" were turned out, and Parliament left to what, if an unauthorised report speaks truly, proved an angry and not altogether dignified debate. In the end the debate was adjourned till the 25th of May, when Mr. Dillwyn has a motion on the general subject.

Anniversary Meetings.

THE BAPTIST UNION.

(By our own Reporter.)

The second session of the Baptist Union of Great Britain was held at Walworth-road Chapel on Thursday morning. The meeting being announced to commence half-an-hour earlier than usual, the attendance was small at first, but was afterwards much increased. The Rev. Dr. Underwood presided, and conducted the devotional service, in which the Revs. Messrs. Ashmead, Morgan, J. S. Oncken, and Fletcher, engaged in prayer. At its conclusion the Rev. Alex. McLaren, B.A., took the chair.

THE REPORT.

The Rev. J. H. Millard, the secretary, read the list of the committee and the report, which stated that during the year the ranks of the pastorate had been reinforced by the accession of sixty-three young ministers, and they had to deplore the loss of thirty-one ministers, conspicuous among whom were the Revs. W. Robinson, of Cambridge, and Charles Vince, of Birmingham. The new churches originated during the year were twenty-five, and thirty-eight new chapels were built, at a cost of £6,185; 124 others were enlarged or improved at a cost of £49,863, making a total outlay of £14,084; the sums of £4,350/- for home missions, £6,000/- for foreign missions, and £15,987/- for colleges, showed a total of £259,097/- raised by the Baptist denomination in the United Kingdom for the direct promotion of Christianity, without reckoning what was required for the support of pastors, the maintenance of Sunday-schools, &c. The clear increase to the membership had been 10,582, a larger number than for ten years past, and there was reason to hope that they were yet but at the beginning of the blessing. It was stated that the committee had sent a memorial to the Emperor of Russia asking for the release of brethren imprisoned for conscience' sake in that country, which was supported by Lord Derby and by the friendly representations of Dean Stanley, and had "in a good degree" proved successful. There might be a spirit of persecution among the more ignorant people, but the Government had ceased to oppress their Baptist brethren. Reference was then made to the action taken by the committee last session in reference to the Endowed Schools Bill, and also to the proposal of a fund of £15,000/- for the extension of the Baptist denomination in large towns, which Mr. R. Cory, jun., of Cardiff, had started with the offer of a donation of £1,500. The necessity of such a work was insisted upon, and the matter is still under the anxious consideration of the committee. Allusion is made to the progress of Roman Catholic views in the Established Church, as furnishing a new and forcible argument for speedy disestablishment. "One of the sources of the danger," say the committee, "lies rather in

the perpetuation of those 'orders' within the Church, which he would preserve, but which the Holy Scriptures have neither enjoined nor authorised. The arrogant encroachments of the Vatican Council have their root in the sacerdotal and sacramental errors which are common to the Church of England and the Church of Rome, and your committee can see no safety for the Church or for society at large, except in that close adherence to New Testament order by which Baptists have ever been distinguished. And it is a fact not without significance, that the very year which has witnessed the outbreak of a controversy destined probably to shake Europe to its centre, has also witnessed the marked development within the walls of Rome, and under the shadow of the Vatican, of our little Baptist church."

The treasurer's statement was then presented by Mr. Baynes, which showed that the total receipts had been £351. 5s. 10d., and the expenditure £358. 10s. 9d., leaving a small balance of £7. 4s. 11d. due to the treasurer.

The Rev. S. H. Booth then moved the following resolution:—

That the report of the committee now read be cordially adopted, and the treasurer's accounts passed, and that the assembly devoutly and humbly acknowledge the goodness of Almighty God in granting to the churches so large and unmerited a measure of prosperity during the year now past. He said the action of the present Government on the question of education and other matters, reminded them that they could not as a Union get rid of their political relations, and therefore reference to them must appear in their report. As they did not sit on the Conservative side of the House they did not look to that party to do their work, and as they were not amongst those who drove their leader from his position, he might say that if he (Mr. Gladstone) would come back and sound along their line the note of disestablishment, they would rally to him with more than the old loyalty, for Mr. Gladstone never gave his word but he tried his utmost to redeem it with all the ardour of his transcendent mind. But while there was political humiliation for the time, they could rejoice that there were spiritual triumphs to record in the wave of spiritual revival which was passing over not only London, but the country. They rejoiced that the addition to their churches had exceeded the increase of the last five years. But that did not satisfy them. They would turn the resolution into a prayer, and pray that the Lord who had given them so much would give them still more. Not that numbers might be added to their Union, but that souls might be converted to God.

The Rev. Char. Short seconded the resolution and with reference to the concluding passage of the report, said he thought their greatest enemies were amongst those mongrel, weak-kneed Nonconformists who were the worst foes of Dissent. The Popish error which was diluted in the Established Church was more dangerous than when plainly outspoken in the Roman Catholic Church. He was glad that the report spoke more cheerfully of their position as Baptists than some previous reports had done. The strong individuality which was their characteristic was the great need of the present day. With respect to their line of action, he hoped that in accordance with the catholicity which they expressed in their prayers they would not try to set up a Baptist Church in each of the villages, for they had a great fight to maintain there already, and he had not yet learnt that to divide and conquer was good for them. Their one object was to bring sinners to the Saviour.

The resolution having been carried unanimously:

THE RELATION OF BAPTISTS TO CERTAIN RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE TIMES.

The Rev. C. Bailhache, B.A., in reading a paper on this subject, said that it was prepared at the request of the sub-committee, and that it was rather a collection of facts, hints, opinions, and suggestions than an essay. The necessities of their position obliged them to give prominence to the phases of religious thought with which they came in contact. Some said they, Baptists, were too self-asserting. But while they thankfully recognised the growing indication of substantial unity, they saw less reason than ever to sink their differences. They were Christians and Baptists always. Not for very many years past had the Christian Church been forced to review her claims, her prerogatives, her methods, her aims, so seriously as now. They had this experience in common with all true believers. He thought that of late, however, the hostility to which revealed truth was exposed had assumed a very momentous aspect, and was of a peculiarly uncompromising character. Science was not only largely unbelieving, but aggressive—its root idea being the rejection of a personal God. These assailants used very polished weapons, and altogether the effect of the movement was disastrous, and it was insidiously, but widely spreading, to an extent little known except to those who had had much opportunity for close personal contact with the religious thoughts and feeling of their fellow-men, and the ill effects were felt by not a few earnest souls whose supreme anxiety was to be in living and constant fellowship with Christ. Now, whatever their opponents might say, they could not recognise the competency of the tribunal which impugned the validity of spiritual realities. Pascal uttered the profound truth, that earthly things needed to be known in order to be loved, but heavenly things needed to be loved in order to be known. A greater than Pascal declared that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are

foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." As Christians, they had our special sphere too in which no man could learn except he were taught of God. At the same time they recognised Christianity not only as a life, but as a science, and as such it could be defended point by point. The assaults upon it were marked by recklessness—

The Bible is often credited with statements which are not to be found in it, but which are nevertheless controverted as though they really existed. Interpretations of some of its statements, which have no foundation, except in mistaken popular notions, or which truer principles of interpretation have made obsolete, are dealt with as though they had the sanction of modern Christian culture. A stupendous and conscientious work for ages past has been brought to bear upon the elucidation of the sacred texts, giving them a stronger claim than ever to the devout acceptance of all truth-seeking students; but in spite of all this, those "who oppose themselves" do not know the Bible in its dogmatic, literary, or scientific aspects. A little earnest research on their part would keep not a few among them from wielding afresh the worn-out weapons of their warfare. Meanwhile, their position is strengthened by the fact that there exists a too easy tendency to permit them to dogmatise as though they themselves possessed an infallibility which they refuse to Moses, Isaiah or Paul.

Some thoughtful people had even come to think that there must be a divorce between philosophy and religion, and that Christians must entrench themselves in their impregnable spiritual stronghold. But they must accept the conflict; and happily amongst the Baptists, as well as other sections of the Church, there were not a few men of high attainments, well abreast of the thought and speculations of the time, and whom they should like to see engaged in the work of establishing a believing science, to counteract that which had no faith. Perhaps they stood too much aloof from this conflict, and the forces latent among themselves were not utilised as they should be, but he was glad to note that exegetical and expository teaching was coming slowly to the front again, and surely the good sense and piety of their churches, helped thereby, would encourage it in their turn. In passing he might protest against the fallacy that there was any antagonism between enthusiasm and culture. In the present Chairman of the Union they had a signal disproof of the allegation. Simultaneously with the disturbances of religious belief was the occurrence of the wonderful spiritual awakening which most of them had seen, not a few felt, and which was still very far from showing any signs of decline. This awakening was far more extensive than was commonly supposed. It was being felt, not in England and Scotland only, but in America, in France, in the northern parts of Europe, in the Islands of the West, and in India. It seemed to be everywhere the protest of the religious conscience against unbelief. Of course objections were raised, and there might be some unfavourable elements mixed up with it—for the seed fell upon different soils and with various results. But, when every fair and unfair deduction had been made, the residuum of good was large—very large, and must not be denied.

Thousands who had long been halting between two opinions have been brought at last to decision for God. Thousands more who had been apparently unmoved by the ordinary means of grace have been brought to Christ; and the fervour and devotedness of many Christian hearts have received a quickening which has been almost as life from the dead.

They had cause for thankfulness—for the present revival was a magnificent testimony to the power of the old Gospel, which told them that true conversion to God was a spiritual change which every soul must experience in order to be saved. Nothing short of a definite change in men's hearts satisfied the Lord, and indefiniteness in the proof and attestation of it ought not to satisfy them. Hence the necessity of urging a faithful adherence to all wise and Scriptural methods aimed at the securing of a true Church membership among themselves. There were noticeable peculiarities in these revival phenomena. A very large number of well-disposed persons were more readily attracted by the irregular, or the extra ecclesiastical efforts made to bring the Gospel within the hearing of the masses, than by the regular and accustomed efforts of ministers and churches in the every-day exercise of their Christian ministries. There was, in fact, a tendency to depreciate the ordinary methods of Christian activity, and in some quarters a disposition to dissociate church life and the ministry from the distinct and imperative mission to evangelise, properly so called, on the plea that churches were no longer equal to the task of spreading the Gospel among the unconverted masses of our countrymen. This he believed to be a mistake.

Partly, because it is a departure from the Scriptural principle that the Christian ministry and the organised Christian Church exist primarily for this great purpose of evangelisation. No minister and no Church can free themselves from their sacred obligation in this matter by being content that the work should be done outside them. That Christians should unite in well-ordered brotherhoods is not disputed, and surely there can be no difficulty in ascertaining what their relation to the unconverted must be. It is incumbent on every believer to make known the Gospel of our salvation, and there is room, happily, for the individual action of each one; but there certainly is strength in concerted endeavour which is not intended merely to secure isolated conversions, but to bring the units for their own good and for the good of others into active and mutually helpful fellowship. The Church can hardly hope to be strengthened by methods which, to any extent, seem to cast a doubt upon its efficiency. Partly, too, because active Christian work and edification are mu-

tually dependent, and no Church can be spiritually strong which is not aggressively at work. And also, partly, because the result of the tendency under notice would lead to the formation of large, fluctuating, unconsolidated bodies, outside the churches, with little taste or fitness for church fellowship, and with little hope of endurance. It would be injurious if the taste for the extraordinary expedients of Christian enterprise were to make people dissatisfied with the ordinary. The tendency to spasmodic excitement is always latent, and may at any time be easily awakened to the weakening of the quiet, central forces of the Christian character. What is needed is, not a fitful enthusiasm that will not burn except in its own chosen sphere, but a love, deep-seated, growing, wise, burning with strengthening intensity, till it reach, as its normal condition, a fervent heat of devotion, seen in every phase of life, and operative in connection with everyday duty, however hidden or commonplace.

They were in danger of forgetting that such devotion as this was doing blessed service in quiet country towns, secluded villages, and the poor districts of large towns, and that it had been the result of quiet, unobtrusive work which they ought not to disparage. For a larger culture, and more practical wisdom, they must patiently wait; but a heartier devotedness to their Master and His cause, they were all summoned to show without further delay. They might talk too much about the heresies within and without the Church, which affected old-established ideas of doctrine and belief, and yet forget that the deadliest heresy ever known—the most wide-spread and the most operative after all—was the divorce which existed between their profession and their life. Mr. Bailhache on resuming his seat was cordially cheered.

The Rev. J. G. Greenough, A.M., of Bristol, proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Bailhache for his elaborate and suggestive paper, and that it be printed and circulated. He sympathised with the desire expressed that those in the denomination who had the ability should speak on the scientific aspects of the question, and denominations which could send men to take high honours at the Universities would not fail to find men of science who could do that. In most of them there was a call to higher work. The motto which Mr. McLaren sounded in his address, and was taken up by Mr. Bailhache, was the motto which that Union would wish to sound. The true bulwark against sceptical assaults was to evangelise more earnestly and more persistently than they had done. The Church had been asking the question, how it was to arouse the spiritual life of its members, and revive God's work in the hearts of believers. The Church had been suffering from spiritual dyspepsia. They had got prescriptions written, but it was not medicine they needed but to get out and breathe the free, fresh air, and to be up and doing God's work, and then they would get the free, fresh life back again. They had ceased to sing the hymn:—

We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground,
A little spot enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's vast wilderness.

But they still had a little of the garden wall in their system. They had thought the call to the ministry was to water the plants in that garden. But that sort of ministry did not do. They must look outside the garden, or it would soon become a wilderness. The Church should be a great evangelising agency. They needed to beware of selfishness, and not to do that work only which fell in with their own inclination, but that which it was their duty to do. The work they had to do in view of the religious aspects of the present time was to evangelise, and so doing they would not have to trouble much about the low condition of the churches and their own hearts. So doing, evangelising work would fire their own souls and make them glow with Divine heat, and they would have the witness in themselves and all about them, and be able to treat with holy scorn the men who laughed at the weakness of the Cross. (Cheers.)

The Rev. W. Best seconded the resolution. It seemed to him that the address was characterised by judicial fairness, and such power as might be expected from the writer's mind. As to the revival, they had accepted the great movement as sent from God. He had not himself had the pleasure of hearing Messrs. Moody and Sankey, but had had the privilege of being mixed up with revival work in Leeds, which was commenced by the Church of England clergy, and conducted by them in the most unsectarian manner. The help of Nonconformists was sought in an informal way, and most of their ministers and many of their laymen joined in it. Nonconformists gave addresses in some of the churches, and one Primitive Methodist even ventured into the reading desk. They were in the inquiry rooms, and if any such persons were under spiritual impressions a note was sent to their own ministers. Those services had been succeeded by others by the Dissenters chiefly, although two of the Established clergy had joined them. The great wave of spiritual power which was passing over the land was by no means limited to Messrs. Moody and Sankey's movement. The pastors and churches of the district had formed an evangelistic band in Leeds. He thought it would be an advantage to them to come down from their pastoral position and engage in evangelising efforts. A large amount of work was now thrown upon them, as many of the converts were in a crude state, and required judicious teaching from pastors. After all it depended upon the fidelity and earnestness of the pastors to take up that work and turn it to the best of all purposes. Not only in Leeds but elsewhere the

great labours of the evangelists had been most successful with those who had been prepared by pastoral teaching. He had the happiness to receive seventy-five members into his church as the direct result of evangelistic efforts, but most of them had been under teaching. A number of them had been Christians for years, but did not say so until that wave of power came over the Church and then they gave themselves to God. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. Underhill thought they could not thoroughly estimate the character of that movement and its results unless they remembered its origin and the form it had assumed in its elementary stages. To a very considerable extent the movement in this country began by the union of gentlemen not members of a Nonconformist body, but men in the Established Church, in the army, and civil service, men in whom God had awakened the desire to see Him honoured. These men started that irregular and outside movement which was not permitted in the Establishment itself, and so the attitude was one of separation from clerical and organised ecclesiastical parties. They did not care to join Dissenters; although they were Baptists in principle, it was not easy for them to break away from the class to which they belonged, and so they were constrained to make the movement wholly uneccllesiastical in character, and there was nothing said about the polity which their Church should assume. They devoted themselves to the clear principles of the Gospel of Christ. They could not consolidate the movement into congregations, as questions of eccllesiastical form would arise, but wherever such consolidation had taken place they had become Baptist churches, not denominational in their sense but anti-sectarian and anti-eccllesiastical. He thought they as a denomination might throw themselves into the movement as a body which was sure to reap the largest fruit. He did not say that from a love for denominationalism, but because he believed they existed as followers of Christ trying to carry out the will of the Lord, and if those friends sub-sided into Baptist churches, he should rejoice at it because he believed they would by so doing be following the example of Christ. It was difficult to gauge the result of that vast wave of spiritual activity, or what would be its effect upon the existing organisations; but that denomination which was most simple in its belief and nearest to the Master's will would ultimately prevail. (Cheers.)

Dr. Underwood, of the General Baptist Society, thought the ideas of evangelisation were very vague, and that it would be well if some well-instructed brother were asked to present a paper on the subject at the autumnal session. Mr. Bailhache was, he thought, a little indefinite in his references to the persons who were doing that work without reference to any eccllesiastical body. Every minister who went as a pastor to a church was bound to do as Timothy was told to do—to do the work of an evangelist.

Dr. Angus said, with regard to their own position as Baptists, the feeling seemed to be that they ought to sacrifice all to the work of converting men. He shared largely in that feeling, but he had a very deep conviction that the need of that movement, and the discussions on scriptural holiness, sprang from the one ordinance which was expressive of decision for Christ. In speaking to inquirers of both classes, he had found they had been wanting in definite ideas of that ordinance which makes a public profession of faith in Christ. Baptism did occupy a prominence which needed to be given to it in all sections of the Christian Church. As long as they had to deal with churches which had no deciding ordinance, they would miss that spiritual life of which it was a symbol. They ought to keep in mind that much of that revival was owing to their distinctive principles, and would do well to give more prominence to that one thing which distinguished them from other sections of the Christian Church. (Cheers.)

Rev. W. Stott, of London, as one of those engaged in the evangelistic work at Leeds, said one feature of it was that it was apart from Messrs. Moody and Sankey's efforts. God had demonstrated that He could work with or without Mr. Moody. He was not sure they were prepared for a large awakening among the unconverted if it came. Dr. Landels had said that at Birmingham, after Mr. Moody had spoken, a great number of inquirers had expressed themselves anxious about their souls, and 600 stood up, and had no one to speak to them. He thought they ought not to put their feet into any man's net, but be quite natural. They asked those who were anxious about their souls to go into an ante-room, and one night they had thirty anxious souls over and above those whom they got individually to speak to. What they wanted was more instruction on the point of how to deal with anxious souls, so that when the blessing came from the Lord, as he hoped it would, they might be prepared for it. They, as young men, were often in fault, and they wanted classes for inquirers, to find out those who had the power and talent to speak to sinners. Did they as ministers expect to see souls saved? Was the Gospel to them the power of God unto salvation? and did they believe it was the same to others, and that God would bless it while they spoke? It had been his joy to add ten a month to his church during the last thirteen years. His was an Union church, and he thought they ought not to make a point of baptism until souls were brought to Christ.

The Rev. Dr. Landels (at the suggestion of the Rev. W. Walters) explained that Mr. Stott had misapprehended what he stated, which was that

while Mr. Moody had some 600 inquirers before him to deal with, there were others in the galleries to whom Christian brethren should speak.

The Rev. W. Woods, of Nottingham, thought they were living in an age in which nothing was thought of which was not a demonstration. Was it necessary for them to have evangelists coming from all parts of the earth? Could they not adapt their existing services to the occasion? If they could only get their hearts set upon the work they did not need to wait for those agents. What they needed was to do their own work patiently and humbly and God would bless their labours.

The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, who was received with general applause, said he had been listening to the discussion, and felt that they were going off into recommendations of one another. They had in their midst evangelists who were equal to any on the face of the earth. Was there any method by which they could employ them? They ought to be thankful to use all, and their duty was to do the work they ought to do. One noble object of a union like that should be the support of evangelists. When the list of ministers came out he looked through it, and sent one of his squadron to a town or village where no pastor was settled, with instructions to him to placard the walls, preach in the streets, and make a stir. He would then send another man to unite them into a church. He found the man sent first must be a different man to the one sent after, and if such men were supported by that Union they could go to towns and villages which had no churches. Evangelists were needed in the great tracts of heathendom in this country. He did not expect they would do that—they were too bulky as a body. Let some brethren go and stay a week in some town, and they would refresh the brethren, who would be glad to see them. If they could do that two or three times in the year, much good would be done. And if they got someone to sing also, he did not see why they should not do so. He did not believe in the wonderful compensatory influence of Baptists, because he had seen churches which were all Baptist, but they had generally been Baptists who caused the soil to become parched. He had no faith in any one truth apart from life. Baptism was a grand shell which kept the chick alive, but it was nothing more. Life was a very odd thing, and did not grow in any particular form, and must be allowed to develop itself. As a body of Baptists they felt they had elements within themselves which they ought to use. He had not any more faith in a brother from the north than from London. But sometimes distance lent enchantment to the view. Let them use their brethren at home as well as abroad. (Cheers.)

The discussion on Mr. Bailhache's paper then closed.

POPEY.

In a somewhat discursive and explanatory speech the Rev. Charles Storl moved:—

That they recognised in the events which are now occurring throughout England, Germany, and Italy, a call on the churches and pastors of the Union for continued effort to confront the growing impostures of Popery with pure expositions of Divine love, as Christ has revealed it with the Sacraments, as He appointed them for use by all confessed believers, and with a service of obedient testimony open to the inspection of all mankind.

This motion having been seconded by the Rev. Mr. Walters, the Rev. Dr. Steane expressed his opinion that nothing would be gained by passing it; in which view the Rev. Dr. Brock also concurred, and the Rev. Mr. Wale, of Ipswich, objected to the use of the term sacrament. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon said he felt in a very comical condition. Some years ago he was passing down a street, and he was asked by a woman (who he afterwards found was a disciple of Johanna Southcote) if he would come in and sign his name against the devil! He was puzzled for a moment, and then said he had always been testifying against the devil and all his works day by day, and if he thought he could get rid of him by signing his name he would do so any number of times, but as he did not think so he must decline. The woman then called after him as he went away, "There goes a man who wouldn't sign his name against the devil!" (Laughter.) He felt that all of them hated Popery through and through, and were intensely desirous to follow their Master's will, but he did not see what good the resolution would do if passed, although they all hated Popery and loved their dear old friend Stove with all their hearts. (Cheers.) Dr. Underhill said Mr. Stove had consented to alter the word "sacrament" to "ordinance" in his resolution. The Rev. Dr. Price proposed that the assembly pass to the next business. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon seconded the proposal, and it was ultimately carried.

The Rev. J. H. Millard said he had received a letter from the Rev. John Aldis, of Plymouth, stating that it would be difficult for the friends there to receive the Union for its autumnal meeting, owing to the illness of his colleague, Mr. Lewis, and other reasons. If any delegate could state if it was likely they could be received elsewhere he would be glad to hear from him.

The Rev. R. Wallace, of Tottenham, proposed the adoption of a petition against the Increase of the Episcopate Bill, which was seconded by the Rev. Dr. Price, and adopted unanimously. This concluded the business of the session.

The delegates then adjourned to the Metropolitan Tabernacle, where an excellent collation was provided by the London Baptist Association. The Rev. W. Howieson occupied the chair, and after the dinner (to which some 300 sat down) short con-

gratulatory speeches were made by the Rev. Dr. Landels, Dr. Underhill, the Revs. Dr. Price, W. Brock, W. Underwood, and C. H. Spurgeon.

BAPTIST BIBLE TRANSLATION SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this society was held at Bloomsbury Chapel, the Rev. Dr. Steane presiding. The chairman, in referring to the necessity of the society, and justifying its existence, said that it was promoted in consequence of the British and Foreign Bible Society refusing to transcribe the words in Scripture relating to baptism as meaning immersion. From the report it appeared that 18,825 copies of the Scripture had been circulated during the year in India, besides other publications, and in its general work the society was progressing.

BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this society was held at Exeter Hall on Wednesday evening—J. P. Bacon, Esq., presiding. From the report read it appears that the society is making considerable progress. During its existence it has published twenty-seven issues of tracts, consisting of a total of 10,565,012. The amount of grants during the last year to localities in the British Isles and on the continent reached the sum of 730/. The annual contributions represent 1,233/, and the sales have exceeded the past year by 23d. 14s. 2d. The results given of the work were stated as most encouraging, some Romish priests being reported as among the converts. The Rev. W. Cuff, of Hackney, delivered an address, in the course of which, referring to a warm controversy proceeding in the East of London between the clergy and the Baptists, he said it was their intention to carry that controversy forward with all vigour, with a view of ascertaining what the clergy really did believe upon the question. The Rev. F. Trestail, the Rev. W. Kloecker, of Germany, and others, afterwards delivered addresses upon the work of the society.

Miscellanous.

THE ALEXANDRA PALACE, MUSWELL-HILL, was opened on Saturday, May 1, in the midst of pouring rain. This, however, did not prevent an immense attendance, some 30,000 persons being present. The weather on the occasion strongly contrasted with the bright sunshine that attended the opening of the building destroyed by fire nearly two years ago. The varied attractions of the new palace and grounds were described by us at some length in a recent number. It may here suffice to say that the Lord Mayor and sheriffs arrived at the building shortly after two o'clock, and were met at the western entrance by the chairman and directors of the company, and an address having been presented to his lordship, he declared the building opened. The announcement was followed by a flourish of trumpets and a salute from the guns of the Hon. Artillery Company in the park below. The Lord Mayor, with the sheriffs, and a large number of provincial mayors, were then conducted to the grand hall, where a musical festival took place, under the direction of Sir Michael Costa. Among the singers were Mdlle. Titens, Mdme. Trebelli, Signor Campanini, and Herr Behrend. After the concert the chairman and directors entertained a numerous company at luncheon. Mr. Gruning, the chairman, presided. The toast of "Success to the Alexandra Palace," was proposed by Mr. Alderman and Sheriff Ellis, and responded to by Mr. Gruning, whose history of the progress of the undertaking showed how one difficulty after another had been met and successfully overcome. The company then dispersed to view the art and floral treasures with which the exhibition is stored. There will be daily concerts in the palace and other entertainments. It is stated that the number of season ticket-holders is very large.

THE ARCTIC EXPEDITION will sail from Portsmouth on the 28th inst. Captain Nares, the commander of the expedition, delivered a lecture in the Winchester Guildhall on Friday upon Arctic discovery. Captain Nares said that when once the Arctic expedition had started on its voyage into regions from which no information whatever could be obtained, there would and there must be an ever-increasing anxiety as to its position and prospects. He spoke of the discoveries first made by Sir Edward Parry, and the perfection to which Arctic travelling had been brought by Sir Leopold McClintock, and observed that the danger of the present expedition became mere child's play when compared with what previous explorers had undergone. The expedition would leave at the end of May, because no other starting earlier had passed through Melville Bay. From Upernivik the current collects the ice in Melville Bay, giving much trouble to whalers every season. If he should get the wind he would be through very quickly, but they would probably wait until the ice was melted as much as possible, and would not make the attempt to pass through until nearly the end of August, which was the only navigable month during the year in the Arctic regions. Once through they would be well into the ice. When once through Melville Bay they would be pretty certain to attain the point reached by the Americans, if they experienced equally fine weather; but this effort would entirely depend upon the sea: n. Should they be fortunate enough to reach eighty-two degrees, like the Americans, as easily as Hall did, to which position they knew the land extended, there was every prospect that they would be able to get 500 miles further, and be still cut off from

the cold. If they then found land they would only be able to travel round the shores; but if they found water he should try and get one of the ships up there. The work was very severe, and nothing but a sense of duty would carry them through it. Every man knew it must be done, and not one would think of giving in. One great trouble to be feared was the southerly current, and, if they could not get into a good harbour before September, it was very possible that they would drift ignominiously and helplessly homeward with the current. It seems that chaplains have at length been found. The Rev. W. H. Pullen, known as the author of "Dame Europa's School," is assigned to the Discovery. The Rev. C. E. Hodson is appointed to the Alert.

DEATH OF MR. WILLIAM LANKESTER, OF SOUTHAMPTON.—Our obituary of last week announced the decease of this much-respected gentleman, who was for more than half-a-century associated with the public and philanthropic movements, as well as the material prosperity of the borough where he resided. He died in the seventy-eighth year of his age. He was both an energetic worker and a prominent leader in the Liberal party; he also took an active part in the Anti-Corn Law agitation, and in the return of Liberal members for Southampton. Mr. Lankester also interested himself in religious movements. He gave the site on which the present Albion Chapel is built, and was from the commencement one of the officers of the church, and treasurer of the building fund. He was also active in the movement for erecting a statue to Dr. Watts, and was for ten years a Justice of the Peace. A painful accident at Cardiff in October, 1873, made him a confirmed invalid. His last public act was to vote at the election in February, 1874, for Messrs. Moffat and Perkins, since which day he had not left his residence. At the funeral on Wednesday every shop in the High-street, Above-bar, Bridge-street, Bernard-street, Oxford-street, St. Mary-street, and East-street, had shutters up or blinds drawn down in token of the high esteem in which Mr. Lankester was held by all classes of society. The whole of deceased's workmen, together with several persons connected with the Floating Bridge Company, of which Mr. Lankester had been managing director for many years, also attended, the workmen walking two and two, respectably attired in mourning. Then followed about twenty private carriages. At the cemetery service, the Rev. H. H. Carlisle offered an impressive prayer, and the Rev. S. March gave a short address. The remains of the deceased were afterwards interred in the family vault. At the police-court on the following day General Tryon said that the deceased was a honest and worthy citizen, and an upright and conscientious magistrate. The General concluded by proposing that a vote of condolence be forwarded to the family of the late Mr. Lankester, expressive of the regret of the bench at the loss they had sustained by his death. Alderman Buchan seconded the motion, which was adopted.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY BANQUET, which inaugurates the opening of the great picture exhibition of the year, took place at Burlington House on Saturday evening. Sir Francis Grant, the President, in the chair. The Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Ward Hunt, M.P., Sir John Lubbock, M.P., the Lord Mayor, and Mr. Matthew Arnold were amongst the speakers. The Prime Minister replied to the toast of "Her Majesty's Ministers." In the course of his speech, the right hon. gentleman observed that he thought that what had most distinguished of late years the English school was the faculty of imagination; and the English artist had developed that faculty under very great disadvantages:

He is not favoured by a climate of inspiration. He is not surrounded by a sublime nature. He does not dwell in cities glittering with symmetry under purple skies. He is not surrounded by human beings whose flashing forms and picturesque gestures stimulate his invention and often afford a happy hint of expression and of grace. For him there are no bantered processions parading the squares and streets of fair cities to animate his fancy amid the fall of fountains and the carolling of sacred bells. No, sir, he lives in a studio invaded too often by the London fog. If he walks forth for relaxation he wanders in streets of hideous monotony. His living studies are the constable and the cabman. Instead of a procession he encounters a blockade of omnibuses, and instead of bursts of harmony he is greeted by the scream of the Subterranean Railway and the horrible concert of organs and hurdygurdies. And yet this man, by his imagination, by that divine gift alone, can give us a canvas breathing with human passions, in scenes of romantic loveliness, and with every accessory of splendour and of grace.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, responding to the toast of the visitors, spoke of the growth of taste among our skilled workmen. Much of this, he said, was owing to our schools of design. All honour to the memory of the illustrious Prince whose example and energy, more than any other cause, contributed to the general establishment through the country of these centres of enlightenment and good taste. Sir Francis Grant, in acknowledging the toast of "Prosperity to the Royal Academy," stated that the number of works of art sent in for exhibition this year was 4,800, which was an increase of 319 over last year and 631 over the year 1873.

THE LATE DR. SAMUEL PRIDEAUX TREGELLES.—The decease of this eminent classical and Biblical scholar was briefly announced in our last. From an interesting biographical sketch in the *Western Morning News* it appears that Dr. Tregelles was

born at Falmouth in 1812, and by early training, association, and marriage was connected with the Society of Friends and the Plymouth Brethren, but his sympathies were too wide for him to join either of these, or, indeed, any religious communion; yet he was a man of deep religious feeling. He was one of those who have been described as Christians unattached, and he devoted himself to his special branch of Christian labour with earnest zeal and unbounded self-sacrifice. It was in 1830 that Dr. Tregelles conceived the plan of his great work, and he had then paid for years considerable attention to the textual criticism of the Scriptures. In June, 1844, he published an edition of the Revelation, with various readings, and publicly announced his intention of issuing an edition of the Greek Testament. He then gave himself up entirely to this great undertaking. In order that he might himself collate the ancient uncials MSS. he went abroad. One of his principal objects was the collation of the famous MS. in the Vatican. He spent five months in Rome, but failed to attain his desire. He saw the MS. occasionally, but was not allowed to transcribe any part. Nevertheless he read many passages, and contrived to record several important readings, making, we believe, an occasional note on his nails. At the Augustinian Monastery in Rome, Florence, Modena, Venice, Munich, Basle, Paris, and other places he was received courteously, and had every facility afforded him. Nine years more elapsed before the first part of the work (the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark) was issued. The labour involved had been gigantic, and weariness of mind and eyes had retarded its progress year by year. But with untiring patience the great scholar pursued his task. Another ten years elapsed—thirty from the time of the first inception—and still it remained uncompleted. At length it reached its close, and with it closed its author's working life. He had barely completed the last chapters of Revelation when he was struck by paralysis, and the pen literally dropped from his hand. He never recovered from the effects of this attack, but happily the task was accomplished, and Tregelles's Greek Testament remains for succeeding ages a worthy monument alike of his piety, scholarship, and toil. Dr. Tregelles was a prolific writer. The degree of LL.D. was conferred upon him in recognition of his attainments, and he held a double pension from the Civil List of, we believe, 200/- a year. His widow survives him, but he leaves no children.

Gleanings.

DR. CHALMERS AND THE DENTIST.—When the Free Church College was first established in Edinburgh, the class-rooms adjoined the house of Mr. Nasmyth, an eminent dentist in George-street. As the students were in the habit of applauding Dr. Chalmers and the other professors during the delivery of their lectures, the noise made in this way often startled and disturbed the patients under Mr. Nasmyth's care. Mr. Nasmyth was obliged to complain, and request by letter to the principal that the students should be more moderate in their applause or express it in some other way than by beating the floor with their feet. On receiving the letter Dr. Chalmers promptly informed the students of Mr. N.'s complaint, and begged that they would at once comply with his request, saying, "I should be very sorry indeed if we were to give offence to any neighbour, but more especially to Mr. Nasmyth, a gentleman so very much in the mouths of the public."

THE TOM-CATS OF THE MONEY OFFICE.—It seems that in this office the nation has for some years employed three tom-cats to catch the mice. The cost of the keep of these animals has been the cause of several rows. The Liberal Government allowed 5d. a-week for each cat, but the person whose duty it was to see that the mousers were properly fed found that 5d. was too little, and in orthodox fashion implored the Treasury for an increased rate. The Treasury granted another penny a-week for each Thomas, and this the Liberal Government ungrudgingly paid; but the Tories, having overhauled the Liberal estimates, have discovered that to pay 6d. a-week for a cat is nothing less than ruinous. A circular has accordingly been issued to the department in which it is gravely set forth that, in the opinion of the Postmaster-General, the duties of the three mousers may be efficiently discharged by an improved mouse-trap baited with cheese-parings. To test the value of the Postmaster-General's belief, a terrific mouse-trap of modern invention has been forwarded to the Money Order Office. If it answers its purpose the tom-cats will be disestablished and disengaged, and the State will be saved at least a shilling per week. Evidently men and mice are in these days ruled by a most economical Government.—*Dundee Advertiser*.

INFANT REQUISITES.—"A Sojourner at Blackheath," who on his return from the East settled down for a time in this suburban district, recently announced in the *Times* the birth of a daughter, giving his address. He was at once inundated with correspondence of an advertising nature, of which he gives the following specimens:—1.—'s pomade, for staining gray hair and whiskers light or dark brown. 2.—'s coiffure—a novel arrangement of long hair. 3.—'s nourishing stout for nursing purposes. 4.—'s instantaneous hair dye. 5.—'s substitute for soap in shaving. 6. Mrs. G.—, ladies' nurse, certificate from the City of

London. 7.—An important discovery for the cure of most diseases, especially gout. 8.—'s saline alkaline sulphurous chalybeate. 9. Book of miscellaneous articles for mothers, nurses, &c. 10. List of prices for clothing a lady and her family. 11. Ditto from an outfitting and baby-linen manufactory. 12.—'s Palma Christi—a lactagogue. 13. Quinine hair lotion. 14. Nursery biscuits. 15.—'s Illustrated Catalogue of Havannah Cigars, Tobacco, &c. 16. Prospectus of a school for boys at Forest-hill. 17. Transparent soap for toilet and shaving. 18. Circular from a society for supplying teachers to the blind. 19. Circulars from the Life Assurance Society. I have also (adds 'A Sojourner') received a pair of baby's shoes, with a request that I will send twelve stamps to the sender, and am now hourly expecting circulars from some of the money-lending fraternity of the 'World.'

AS IT IS**AS IT OUGHT TO BE**

In 'The Times' of Jan. 7th, Dr. HASSALL writes:—
"I have made a further analysis of tea; of 13 samples, all were found to be adulterated. They were all artificially coloured with Prussian blue, turmeric, & a mineral powder. The substances used in facing tea serve no useful purpose, but render practicable other adulterations." A. H. HASSALL, M.D.

3,248 AGENTS—Chemists, Confectioners, &c. in every town sell HORNIMAN'S PACKET TEA

Births, Marriages, and Deaths.

[A uniform charge of One Shilling (prepaid) is made for announcements under this heading, for which postage-stamps will be received. All such announcements must be authenticated by the name and address of the sender.]

MARRIAGE.

INGRAM—FRANCIS.—April 28, at Kingston, Surrey, by the father of the bridegroom, Archibald Brown, eldest son of the Rev. George S. Ingram, of Richmond, to Kate Agnes, third daughter of William Francis, Esq., Fern Bank, Norbiton. No cards.

DEATHS.

THOMAS—May 2, at Hillside, Cotham, Bristol, Jessie, daughter of the Rev. David Thomas, aged 19. EVEREST.—May 3, Henry Everest, of Prospect Hill, Rochester, aged 72 years. Friends will kindly accept this intimation.

FUNERAL REFORM.

The LONDON NECROPOLIS COMPANY conducts Funerals with simplicity, and with great economy. Prospects free.—Chief Office, 2, Lancaster-place, Strand, W.C.

AFTER an experience of over forty years, it has been established that there are few instances of defects of the hair which cannot be arrested, neutralised, or remedied by the use of Mrs. S. A. Allen's World's Hair Restorer, and the favourable effect to be seen at once, and though the hair may have become grey, thin, or faded, it may be renewed and restored to all the glossy loveliness of which it is susceptible. Sold by all Chemists and Perfumers, Depot, 114 and 116, Southampton-row, London.

STEDMAN'S TEETHING POWDERS.—Mrs. Hughes, of Beechfield, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire, writes:—"I have used your teething powders regularly for nearly two years, and in no single instance have I found them fail. No words of mine can half express the confidence I have in them, nor convey any idea of the great value and comfort they have been to me and many other mothers to whom I have recommended them." Also highly approved by Lady Susan Milbank, Ashfield, Suffolk. Stedman's Teething Powders are prepared by a Surgeon, formerly attached to a Children's Hospital. Trade mark, a gum-lancet. Refuse all others. Price 1s. 1d. and 2s. 9d.—Depot, 78, East-road, London, N.

ASTHMA, AND MALADIES OF THE CHEST AND LUNGS.—SLADE'S ANTI-ASTHMATIC CIGARETTES, after many careful trials, and found to be safe, efficient, and agreeable, are prescribed at the Brompton and Victoria Park Hospitals, and by many other eminent physicians in the United Kingdom, Colonies, and on the Continent. They afford instant relief (however distressing the paroxysms may be) in every case, and in many instances a final cure. Bottles, 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d., and 11s.—Thomas Slade, 118, Long Acre, London and all chemists.

DYING AT HOME.—JUDSON'S DYES are most useful and effectual. Ribbons, silks, feathers, scarfs, lace, braid veils, handkerchiefs, cloths, berneous, Shetland shawls, or any small article of dress can easily be dyed in a few minutes, without soiling the hands. Violet, magenta, crimson, mauve, purple, pink, pomegranate, claret, &c. Sixpence per bottle, of chemists and stationers.

KINAHAN'S LL WHISKY.—This most celebrated and delicious old mellow spirit is the very cream of Irish Whiskies, in quality unrivalled, perfectly pure, and more wholesome than the finest Cognac Brandy. Note the Red Seal, Pink label, and Cork branded "Kinahan's LL Whisky." Wholesale, 20, Great Titchfield-street, Oxford-st. W.

LOVELINESS ON THE INCREASE.—A marked increase of female loveliness is the eye-delighting result of the immense popularity which Hagan's Magnolia Balm has obtained among ladies everywhere. Complexions radiant with snowy purity, and tinged with the rosy hue of health, are commonly met with wherever it is used. Sold by all Chemists and Perfumers, in bottles, and elegant toilet case at 3s. 6d. Depot 114 and 116, Southampton-row, London.

HOLLOWAY'S OINTMENT AND PILLS.—Safely and Securely.—When the severities of winter have yielded to the genial spring, invalids should make a determined effort to regain their lost health. When, through confinement indoors, want of appetite, and disturbed sleep, the entire system has been weakened, and the spirits have been broken down, Holloway's remedies are equal to the occasion. The Ointment rubbed over the region of the stomach and liver, aided by the internal administration of his Pills, will rectify the digestion, regulate the bile, and purify the blood—three sanitary actions which will speedily confer renewed vigour, brace up the failing nerves, confirm the flaccid muscles, and restore to the ailing cheerfulness, that great charm of existence.

THROAT IRRITATION.—The throat and windpipe are especially liable to inflammation, causing soreness and dryness, tickling and irritation, inducing cough and affecting the voice. For these symptoms use glycerine in the form of jujubes. Glycerine in these agreeable confections, being in proximity to the glands at the moment they are excited by the act of sucking, becomes actively healing. 6d. and 1s. packets (by post 8 or 15 stamps), labelled "JAMES EPPS and Co., Homoeopathic Chemists, 48, Threadneedle-street, and 170, Piccadilly, London."

THE INSTITUTION FOR DISEASES OF THE SKIN, 227, Gray's Inn-road, King's-cross, is open on Monday and Thursday evenings from six till nine; the City branch, 10, Mitre-street, Aldgate, on Wednesday and Friday evenings. The institution is free to the necessitous poor; payment is required from other applicants.

Advertisements.**BRITISH EQUITABLE ASSURANCE COMPANY.**

OFFICES:—4, QUEEN STREET PLACE, LONDON, E.C.

NINETEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

1. The new business of the nineteenth year consists of 2,307 policies, assuring £406,630, and yielding a new Annual Premium Revenue of £12,236.

2. The business remaining in force at the end of the year after deducting all lapsed policies from death, surrender, or other cause of termination, consists of 10,111 policies, assuring £3,306,338, and yielding an Annual Premium Revenue of £104,936.

3. The payments on all terminated policies during the year have been as follows:—

192 Death Claims and Bonuses.....	£33,111
26 Matured Policies and Bonuses	29,987
218 Policy Claims and Bonuses.....	£36,098

Surrendered Policies £2,062

4. The payments made by the Company on all terminated policies during nineteen years have been £255,924 on 1,584 death and matured policy claims and bonuses.

5. The Accumulated Fund has increased from £311,115 to £355,202, £44,087 having been laid by in the nineteenth year.

6. The Accumulated Fund is invested in Government Securities, Freehold Ground Rents, Corporation Bonds of the City of London, Mortgages, &c., and is equal in amount to upwards of one-half of the gross premiums received on all policies in force on the Company's books.

7. The Investments and Re-investments of the year have been in—

Government Funds	£27,481
Ground Rents	27,883
Mortgages, &c.	17,837

£73,208

The average rate of interest thereon being £4 16s. 2d. per cent.

8. The Auditors have carefully examined the accounts and securities of the Company, and have expressed their approbation of the manner in which the accounts are kept, and the general results of the audit.

9. The steady progress of the Company should encourage the Policy-holders to continue their efforts, which have mainly placed the Company in its present satisfactory position.

May, 1874.

PARTNERSHIP WANTED, in a sound mercantile business, by a gentleman of considerable and varied experience, who could introduce moderate capital. Particulars to Merchant, care of Messrs. Theodore, Brothers, and Miall, Accountants, 30, Mark-lane, E.C.

EDUCATION, RAMSGATE (the most healthful town in England).—A good Nonconformist School, classical and commercial. Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations. No sickness these last five years. Good table. Terms moderate. References in all parts of London.—H. Warren, M.C.P., Belmont House.

WANTED.—A GENTLEMAN to undertake the office of ASSISTANT MINISTER at the Church of the Saviour, Birmingham. He will be required to conduct the service on Sunday evenings.

Apply by letter, stating age and qualifications, to the wardens of the church, care of Mr. Treston, Helena-street, Edward-street, Birmingham.

THE NONCONFORMIST: A First-class Undenominational Newspaper and Organ of Free Church Principles.

Edited by EDWARD MIALL, Esq.

PRICE FIVEPENCE, OR (IN ADVANCE) A GUINEA A YEAR.

MAY MEETINGS AND SUPPLEMENTS.

The "NONCONFORMIST" of WEDNESDAY, May 12 (with FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT), will contain Reports of the First Session of the Congregational Union, and of the Anniversaries of the Bible Society, Religious Tract Society, Sunday-school Union, British and Foreign School Society, &c.

The "NONCONFORMIST" of WEDNESDAY, May 19 (with FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT), will contain Reports of the Congregational Union (Second Session), and of the Anniversary Meetings of the London Missionary Society, Peace Society, Home Missionary and Colonial Missionary Societies.

The "NONCONFORMIST" of WEDNESDAY, May 26 (with FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT), will contain Reports of the remainder of the Anniversary Meetings, and a Special Paper containing a General Survey of the Work of the various Religious and Philanthropic Societies.

The five May numbers (Fivepence each separately), will be forwarded by post on the receipt of Two Shillings in stamps.

* Advertisements (if for all the three remaining numbers at reduced rate) should be sent not later than noon on the day before publication.

W. R. Wilcox, 18, Botteverie-street, Fleet-street, E.C.

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BOSTON 34, Market-place.

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ANGLESEA HOUSE, IPSWICH.

THIS PRINCIPAL of a Large Ladies College WISHES to RECEIVE the DAUGHTERS of four Independent Ministers on very favourable terms—to be shown on application to the above address.

ORGANIST.—A LADY SEEKS an APPOINTMENT in a Nonconformist Church. First-class references from ministers and others—Address, A. L., Mr. Humphries, The Bank, Diss, Norfolk.

PEOPLE'S LECTURE-HALL, SCHOOLS, &c., in South London.

Near the New-cut, in the midst of a dense population, DAWKSTONE HALL is in process of erection. It is designed for the unsectarian religious instruction of children, for popular lectures on sanitary, scientific, literary, and temperance subjects for the working classes, and for philanthropic and charitable purposes.

The work to be done is not hypothetical, but is in actual operation. The Benevolent Society, which will here have its centre, relieves the sick at their own homes, without any regard to religious opinions. Since its formation this Society has distributed £39,500 to 84,000 cases, besides gifts of coal, blankets, &c. Upwards of 500 cases are aided annually, about £300 expended, and a well-trained nurse is employed in visitation.

The school to be carried on will be the headquarters of a society which now includes thirteen schools with 5,000 children and 400 voluntary teachers of all denominations.

Clothing societies, mothers' meetings, Bands of Hope, and other institutions for the benefit of the poor population around, will be carried on in the various committee rooms attached to the hall.

Most of these agencies were established by the Rev. Rowland Hill, and have been hitherto carried on in premises the lease of which is about to expire. In these larger and more convenient buildings operations on a much larger scale will be conducted for the benefit of an increasing population.

Among those who have contributed are:—

The Duke of Westminster. The Right Honourable Company of Fishmongers. Messrs. Baring, Brothers. Messrs. Copestake, Moore, and Co. Messrs. Glyn, Mills, and Co. Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P.

The total cost, including freehold site, is £9,457, of which £2,000 are still required. It is earnestly hoped this may be obtained, so that the buildings may be completed without incurring a debt which would embarrass the charity in its active work among the poor.

CONTRIBUTIONS may be sent to the account at Messrs. Glyn and Co.'s, Lombard-street; to Mr. C. Ruck, Treasurer, 40, King William-street, E.C.; or to the Rev. Newman Hall, LL.B., Surrey Parsonage, S.E., by whom any aid will be thankfully acknowledged.

ABOLITION OF STATE REGULATION OF VICE.

A MEETING of Congregationalists to promote the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts will be held in the PILLAR HALL of CANNON STREET HOTEL, on WEDNESDAY, 12th May, 1875, at 7 p.m.

S. MORLEY, Esq., M.P., will preside.

The Meeting will be addressed by Rev. John Kennedy, D.D., Rev. A. Morton Brown, LL.D., Rev. D. G. Watt, M.A. (of Maidstone, one of the places subject to the Acts), Rev. G. M. Murphy, &c. Sir Harcourt Johnstone, Bart., M.P., and the Right Hon. James Stanfield, M.P., have also promised to attend the Meeting and speak. The Meeting has been called in the names of the following gentlemen, viz.:—

Rev. James Parsons.
" Newman Hall, LL.B.
" John Kennedy, D.D.
" David Thomas, B.A.
" A. Morton Brown, LL.D.
" T. G. Horton.
" R. Ashton.
" G. B. Johnson.
" John Ross.
" Alexander Reid.
" Septimus March, B.A.
" J. H. Wilson.
" G. M. Murphy.
" James Fleming.
" D. G. Watt, M.A.
" J. De Kewer Williams.
" J. Hiles Hitchens.
" C. Goward.
" W. Tyler.
" Alexander Murray.
" W. Farrer, LL.B.
" J. A. Macfadyen, M.A.
" Richard Skinner.
" Wm. Griffiths, M.A.
" Henry Simon.
" Wm. Marshall.
" J. B. Paton, M.A.
" S. Goodall.
" Thomas Arnold.
" George Gill.
" Eliezer Jones.

Rev. David Martin.
" E. S. Prout, M.A.
" B. Waugh.
" J. S. Russell, M.A.
" J. Morley Wright.
" W. A. Wrigley.
" Robert McAll.
" J. E. Flower, M.A.
" G. T. Coster.
" J. R. Wolstenholme, M.A.
" W. Knibb Lea.
" A. Clark.
" John Browne, B.A.
" H. Kendall.
" W. Shillito.
" L. Vale Mummery.
" W. Spensley.
" F. Knowles.
" G. T. Allen, B.A.
" Halley Stewart.
" B. Beddow.
" S. Wilkinson.
" Thomas Nicholson.
" G. Twentyman, B.D.
" Wm. Crossley, Esq.
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" J. Wycliffe Wilson, Esq.

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The SEVENTIETH GENERAL MEETING of this Society will be held on MONDAY, May 10th, 1875, in the LARGE ROOM, Borough Road.

The Chair will be taken by the Right Honourable the EARL RUSSELL, K.G., at Twelve o'clock.

Tickets may be obtained by application at the Society's House, Borough Road.

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Published by W. R. WILLOX, at No. 18, Bouvier Street, London; and Printed by R. K. BURT and Co., Wine Office Court, Fleet Street, London.—Thursday, May 6, 1875.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE NONCONFORMIST.

VOL. XXXVI.—NEW SERIES, No. 1537.

LONDON: THURSDAY, MAY 6, 1875.

GRATIS.

Anniversary Meetings.

BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The annual meeting was held at Exeter Hall on Thursday evening. There was a large attendance. Mr. J. S. Wright, J.P., of Birmingham, occupied the chair, and amongst those on the platform were Mr. Justice Lush, the Rev. Drs. Brock, Underhill, J. P. Chown, and J. G. Omcken. The Rev. T. Morgan, of Howrah, who had been announced to speak, was unable to be present in consequence of illness. The hymn commencing "All hail incarnate God", having been sung, and prayer having been offered by the Rev. Mr. Collins,

Dr. Underhill, the secretary, gave an abstract of the report of the committee. It commenced by the record of gratitude to the Head of the Church that the hopes expressed by the committee at the last year's services had been fulfilled. The showers of blessing which had fallen on other lands, had also come upon the missions of the society, and every part of the mission field had borne much fruit. During the year 3,546 persons had by baptism professed themselves followers of the Lord Jesus, viz.:—In the East, excluding Sonthalistan, 392; of the Sonthals, 1,600; and in Africa, the West Indies, and Europe, 1,554. Surely this was a Divine attestation that the labours of the society were not in vain in the Lord. The missionary staff had been increased by nine brethren, two of whom had become pastors of the churches in Colombo and Bombay; three had entered on Christ's service in Northern India. One, a Tamil by birth, commenced a mission in Madras. The remaining three occupied stations in Africa, Hayti, and Trinidad. The committee are most anxious to find at least one colleague during the ensuing year for the Rev. T. Richard, their missionary in China. One missionary had been removed by death, the Rev. J. Lawrence, of Monghyr. Forty-one years of his life were spent in India, whither he went in 1831, not to return till disabled by disease. He died at Loughton, the place where he consecrated his youthful energies to the service of Christ, having fulfilled his course with a patience, a diligence, and a zeal seldom surpassed. Considerable space in the report is devoted to the missionary operations carried on in India, where there have been considerable accessions to the churches. One new feature was the holding of outdoor services on the Maidan, the great evening promenade of the wealthy inhabitants of Calcutta, and also in other open parts of the city, under the auspices of the Calcutta Missionary Conference. The addresses were chiefly in English, and occasionally in Urdu or Bengali. The hearers were for the most part well-dressed Babus, with some English and Eurasians, and the result was most encouraging. There had also been revival services of a gratifying nature in the English Church, Calcutta, and elsewhere, which led to an increase of church members. Monghyr, Dinsapore, Delhi, and Agra had largely shared in the merciful visitation. The importance of such conversions of Europeans is insisted on as having a vital relation to the progress of the Gospel among the heathen, upon whom example, whether good or bad, has a great influence. The noble theory of Christianity was too often grossly scandalised by the habits of ungodly Europeans, while the lives of such men as Donald McLeod, Henry Lawrence, Nicholson and Edwards, told mightily on the natives. There is little doubt that the reckless life, the depravity, and the scepticism of no inconsiderable section of the Europeans residing in the land, is the greatest obstacle to the spread of the Gospel in India. Signs of religious life have been displayed by the native churches, and there has been an awakening among the population outside of them. The Rev. G. Kerry, of Lukhayantipore, reports that in that district there has been a large number of inquirers and hundreds of thousands of hearers. In the southern district of Jepore a good work is going on; at Backergunge the vitality of Christian life had been attested by many pleasing facts. In Delhi also there were many signs of encouragement, which, says the Rev. J. Smith, "repay us for years of toil." A Hindoo teacher had been especially successful among the natives, and the churches had been increased, and quickened in their exertions for the salvation of others. "There is," says Mr. Smith, "a sound of abundance of rain," and everywhere in his district he found large numbers of people willing to receive the messengers of the Cross. In these gatherings large use has been made of sacred song, in the melas the missionaries have gathered round them crowds to hear them sing the praises of Jesus. The circulation of the Bible has been carried on with zeal, the people in almost all cases showing their desire to have the Scriptures by willingly paying the small

charge fixed for them. About 80,000 copies of various portions of the Scriptures have left the press, printed partly for the Bible Translation Society, and partly for the Calcutta Auxiliary of the Bible Society. The last revision of the Bengali Bible by the Rev. Dr. Wenger was finished at press in April, 1874. It has been issued in two editions. Connected with Biblical work there has been a Bengali metrical version of the Psalms, adapted to native music, and now in the press by Munshi Aziz Bari, a convert of the mission. Sir Richard Temple, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, presided on the prize day of Serampore College, and spoke in the highest terms of the work of the college, and of the eminent men by whom it was founded, in the following passage—

When the founders of this mission, he said, first came to India, the country was in a very unsettled and excitable state. The fact of Christianity being preached caused great distrust and suspicion in the minds of the natives; it caused even a certain amount of political trouble and disaffection. The Government of that day, rightly or wrongly, took the alarm, and threatened to deport the missionaries. Sometimes the missionaries were visited with pains and penalties; sometimes they were hauled before the judges and dragged into police-courts; sometimes surrounded by angry and multitudinous mobs; some of them even suffered shipwreck: others, again, lived in the jungles in a state of want and misery, where they were found with scarcely sufficient provision remaining for their sustenance. But time rolls on, and the aspect of the country is changed. The Government now no longer fears that disturbances will arise from proclaiming and preaching the Gospel of peace; the natives themselves seem no longer to regard missionaries with distrust, and indeed, as an impartial observer travelling through Bengal, it seems to me that the missionaries are absolutely popular. If I go to the large cities, I see schools and colleges which belong to the various Christian missions, which may not, indeed, equal the Government institutions in strength and resources, but which fully equal them in popularity. In the interior of the country among the villages, I find missionary institutions established in almost all parts of Bengal. The missionaries appear to be regarded by their rustic neighbours with respect, I may say almost with affection. They are consulted by their neighbours—by the poor ignorant rural neighbours—in every difficulty and every trouble, and seem to be regarded by them as their best and truest friends.

The Sonthal Mission has joyfully received Mr. Skrefsrud on his return with his companions, some 2,000 persons assembling to give them welcome. The work of Christ continues to spread rapidly in their midst. Over 1,600 grown-up Sonthals have been baptized, upon a profession of faith in Christ, and there is great likelihood that numbers more will follow. It was the intention of the brethren to form as speedily as possible an institution for the training of pastors and evangelists, while Mr. Skrefsrud would devote much of his time to the production of a version of the Holy Scriptures and other suitable literature for their use. After a brief reference to the Zenana Mission, of which we gave an account last week, special attention is called to the magnitude of the mission field in India, where the population is much larger than had been supposed. In Bengal there were some sixty-seven millions; in the North-West Provinces, thirty-one millions; and in the two together 290,000 towns and villages; while the entire staff of Baptist missionaries and evangelists numbered only one hundred and eighty individuals. In Ceylon the mission continues to spread its roots, and a new district has been added to those already occupied. The governor of the island, in an address to his council, lately, said:—"I know of no country where missionary enterprise is doing better work than here, or where there is less of the *odium theologicum*." Brief reference is made to the mission to China, weakened by the departure of Mr. Brown and the illness of the native evangelist. Mr. Richard had been assisted by four native brethren, and Pastor Ching had been successful in his medical treatment, which gave him Christian facilities; but the need of additional European agency was greatly felt. Africa has also borne fruit to God, while the number of missionaries has been increased by the addition of Mr. Grenfell. Mr. Saker and Mr. Smith are preparing to make a strenuous effort to carry the Gospel still further into the interior. They have made an attempt to penetrate the country beyond the mountains, and the committee are not without hope that in this direction also the interior may be reached. In Trinidad, the Rev. W. Williams has joined Mr. Gamble, and they report the steady growth of the churches in numbers and intelligence. The same is the case with the Bahamas. In Jamaica the churches have enjoyed large additions, and peace and harmony prevail amongst them. The net increase is nearly seven hundred persons. Of the missions in Europe, in Brittany a most interesting movement has commenced, and crowds listen to the Gospel. In Norway further progress has been made, while in Rome the committee has secured suitable premises for the prosecution of Mr. Wall's most interesting work. The hall that has been built for Divine worship was opened on the 21st of March, amidst many marks of the Divine blessing. The church now consists of ninety members.

Mr. Joseph Tritton (Treasurer) then presented his account, from which it appeared that the total income amounted to 40,121. 10s. The expenditure exceeded the income by 1,143. 15s., which, however, had been met by special contributions. He also mentioned that amongst the list of promised contributions was one of 400*l.* from their honoured secretary, Dr. Underhill, a gift most valuable and helpful in itself, and which he took as an expression of personal devotion to the cause of the Divine Master. (Cheers.)

The Chairman said he felt it was due to them to make some kind of apology for his position in the chair. He could not see why it should be occupied by a provincial, but he supposed the friends were inclined to recognise Birmingham. The report was one upon which they might congratulate themselves. They might rejoice in it, and glory in it, but not take the praise to themselves, but give it to Him who had put it into the hearts of His people to do so much for the mission cause. It was a joyful fact that they were out of debt, and they had a larger number of converts than in preceding years, which was of more value than the money. Nine new missionaries had been sent out. It was thirty years at least since they had sent out so many missionaries. They were making a wise provision for the future, and there were no signs of wearing out or decadence in their system. He was disposed to take the position of a manager of a joint-stock company. They had shareholders in all parts of the country, and he thought they had declared a good dividend, and that none could complain that there had been a wasteful outlay during the year. The committee had asked for more money, and it had been given them. The company was in one sense a limited one—not that they had paid all they had to pay—they could not pay a life premium, and the payment should only be limited to the extent God had prospered them. The report was largely occupied with India, and he hoped the time would never come when it would occupy a second place in that society. From the days of Thomas to the days of the last missionary the connection of that society with India had been an honourable one, and the more it was looked back upon by historians the more it would be felt to be so. (Hear, hear.) It was strange how little they knew about India, though he didn't suppose their ignorance equalled that of the old lady who asked if India was not just the other side of Ireland. (Laughter.) There was a power given to Englishmen which had not been given to any other nation of the world. Between two or three hundred millions of people had been given to these islanders to govern. We put a man who was not known to them and make him supreme governor of a mighty kingdom. An Englishman might go there and acquire an influence which was impossible here. A young man went out from Birmingham, and returned some time after as an honourable member of the Legislative Council. He did not know but that they took more interest in the moral and spiritual condition of the people of India than they did at St. Stephen's, Westminster. When they talked about India they could scarcely keep a House of forty members. The particular object seemed to be how much could be got from India. If there was a mutiny or famine, their interest was awakened, but otherwise, who cared for their happiness? and who asked in the House of Commons if they had discharged their duty to those 250 millions of people? Could they form an idea of its numbers? 280,000 towns and villages. London was a big place with its three millions, but eighty or ninety Londons would hardly contain the number of immortal souls in India. There was a great work for the Baptists of England to do in India. Might God give them an ever increasing interest in the well-being of the people of India, and might the five missionaries they had sent out during the past year soon be multiplied by five, though it was not so much the number as the quality of the men that must be looked at, and in that respect the committee had used their best discretion. It would be easy to get second-class men, but they wanted first-class men—men of the greatest grace and devotion. He thanked God for the men they had had in the past, men who stood out as giants. They needed the best men to be found in the ranks of the church, and they had such men now in Geo. Smith of Delhi, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Wenger, and Jonathan Goble, the American Baptist missionary at Yokohama, Japan, who, though one of their missionaries, had invented a new kind of conveyance that was being used instead of the palanquins; had he not done good to the people thereby? And all who had been brought into contact with Mr. Skrefsrud must have been struck by his influence. He knew of no man in modern times who had done more to arouse the missionary spirit. What was the standard at which they should aim? Mr. Boerresen had been described by a writer in the *Times* as a man of untiring activity, with great tenderness of feeling, abounding in quiet humour and strong common-sense, powerful will, and extraordinary faith. When they could find such men the work must prosper. How were such men to be raised? They must come out of the churches, and just in proportion as the missionary spirit permeated them as in primitive times, they would have men to go and

stand by the side of those they had already. Let the report read that day only stimulate them, and they might live to see the day when the heathen temples should be places for the worship of God, and not only India, but all the world would be filled with the knowledge of God. (Cheers.)

The Rev. E. G. Gange, of Bristol, moved the first resolution:—

What this meeting acknowledges, with devout thankfulness to God, the blessing which He has bestowed upon the labours of the society's missionaries in almost every field they occupy. It is grateful, too, for the assurance that the same blessing has been very largely shared by kindred societies. It further expresses its sense of the hopefulness which is cherished, both at home and abroad, as to the results of future labour, and accepts this hope, both as a stimulus to more earnest effort, and as a pledge of still greater results.

May meetings had been held in that hall, but never was a meeting called together for a greater object than that which they had in view—to bring men from the darkness of barbarism to the light of truth, and they were determined, by God's blessing, never to cease until they had converted the whole world to Christ. They ought to be thankful for the past history of that society. Not long ago Dean Stanley spoke of the advantage of possessing a great name, and how it would often stimulate men to noble deeds. He knew what it was to be pastor of a church which had a grand and glorious history; for the church over which he presided had a history of two hundred years. It was formed in a time of bitter persecution, and not a few of his predecessors had been incarcerated in prison for asserting liberty of conscience. Often in moments of depression the past came over one and stimulated to greater deeds. They ought to be proud of the history of Nonconformity. It was a history blotted with suffering, but also bright with triumphs. Although Baptists were a despised and down-trodden sect, and if one of them happened to die where there was no cemetery, the clergyman would look upon him as he did upon a suicide, they ought to be humbly proud of the history of the Baptist Missionary Society. (Cheers.) He was glad they were the first in the field; that among the Protestant Churches of England they had led the van; that it was a Baptist who first went out as a missionary to storm the fortress and tear down the banner of heathendom and plant the banner of the Cross. Thank God, they were not alone now. Everywhere they looked they saw clouds of dust indicating the advance of the great missionary army. (Loud cheers.) America sent reinforcements, and Independents and Episcopalian were serving the common cause of their common Lord, and by-and-bye there would be the shout of victory all along the line. (Cheers.) It was said that the pulpit was losing its power, and that they had no living men equal to those gone before. Perhaps it was distance lent enchantment to the past, and a man must die before he was canonised. If they knew as much about the fathers who had gone as they did about the brethren now living, they might find that there were brethren now living not a whit inferior to those who had passed away. Death had made and have in their denomination, and he looked in vain for faces he had seen on that platform—John Howard Hinton, William Robinson, of Cambridge, Nathaniel Haycroft, and they missed and would miss for some time to come the good, gentle, loving, homely face of their brother Charles Vines, now safe in the arms of Jesus. What they wanted to see was a number of young aspungs rising up to become strong oaks, a number of younger and stronger men raised up to take the standard from the nerveless hands of those who were failing, and plant it one step nearer the enemy's ranks. Some brethren were putting off their armour and resigning the pastorate, and that indicated that the day of their redemption was drawing near. Far distant be the day when their honoured brethren Birrell and Brock should no longer be seen or heard amongst them! (Cheers.) He hoped that the Lord had His Davids now quietly keeping their flocks, and that when God's hour struck, the right men would come forward. So far as their brethren abroad went there was no deterioration. He remembered with grateful joy their brethren Robert Smith, of the Cameroons, Thomas Lee, of Jamaica, Lewis, and J. C. Page. While they spoke about the missionaries they must not forget their wives, but give all honour to their missionary sisters. He looked upon the Zemane mission with great hope. They were doing a work which they were not asked to do, and they were doing it without reward. They preached Christ to the native women, and he thought their sisters were upon the right track. They knew that if the ladies made up their minds to anything the work was sure to be done. As was said when there was a question of paving St. Paul's-churchyard with wood, if the bishops would only lay their heads together the work would soon be done. (Laughter.) The work was great and awful, and if God was not with them they might as well give it up. How often had they failed to look up. Some ministers seemed to think they had only to get the text and hold the congregation together, and they could convert the soul all by themselves. If they would only look up they would come to God's work with a light heart. That was what they wanted to do in connection with that society. They must not look to the committee or to the secretary or to the members, but to Him who stood at the bow of the boat, and as they obeyed His voice and launched out into the deep and let down the net, it would break with the multitude gathered into it. They were in for a fight, and were bound to serve because they were not going to the war at their own cost. If the presence of the Duke of Wellington on the field of battle was equal to a

brigade, the presence of the Lord God with them would encourage them. Let Cromwell's cry be theirs—the Lord of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Dr. Mullens, of the London Missionary Society, was called upon to second the resolution. Having carefully read the report of which an outline had been given, he could most heartily command to them the sentiments of that resolution that it was their duty to offer their grateful thanks to God for all He had done. He was always glad to speak about India, and he felt a peculiar pleasure in addressing brethren who were supporters of a society which had been so long connected with India. Little did those who had never left their native land know of the glamour and fascination exerted by that great empire upon those who had lived there long. No one could see the magnificent buildings which were memorials of the past without feeling what a wonderful land India was, and what a wonderful land it was destined to become under the influence of the Gospel. Those who had known India long were never more proud of her than at present. No empire in any part of the world had made such wonderful progress during the last fifteen years as had their Indian empire since the Mutiny was put down. The progress which it had made surpassed all the expectations formed. Reference had been made to a most wonderful document just issued by the Indian Government. That report entered fully into a description of the civil Government of India, and closed with a most graceful recognition of the aid rendered to education through the benevolent assistance of the missionary societies and their agents. The revenue of India was fifty millions a-year, its trade ninety-two millions of exports and imports, and there were 6,000 miles of railway. They used to think of India as a great country with 180 millions of people, but now they found they had more than 200 millions under their direct rule, or 283 millions, including feudatory states. They had fought during many ages at home for the right of the subject and of his conscience, and had won those victories after many a hard struggle, but there never was a gift as generous as when under the reign of Queen Victoria they had made a present of that liberty to their Indian fellow-subjects. (Cheers.) No citizen of France, or Russia, or Spain had anything like the amount of civil and religious liberty which they enjoyed, and if they had given them nothing else the boon would have been a great one. (Cheers.) They had been placed in charge of that great empire, and though it appeared difficult to get an audience in the House of Commons he did not think it was because they were indifferent; for no man who had not visited India, and seen its people and the wonderful beauties of that land, could ever realize its broad depths, and people were afraid to speak about it on that account. But deep down in their lives there was an earnest desire and strong determination that so long as we held India it should be well and wisely governed. The main system of administration was one of a very high order. Much had been said of the grandeur and glory of the Baptist Missionary Society, and he would second every word that had been said on that subject, but he could never forget that there were men of all missionary societies labouring there together. (Applause.) He had the honour of being one of the first missionaries to gather up in a single paper a description of the labours of all his brethren put on a common level, and he was glad to see it well noted in a Government report that there were 600 missionaries belonging to these evangelical missionary societies scattered all over India, with 3,000 native helpers and 150,000 converts. One thing he never forgot, that all they saw was not a tithe of what had been done. They saw their 150,000 people going to their Christian congregations, and bringing their children to their schools, but where were the millions they had instructed? The influence of a missionary went far beyond what he could gauge. They could rejoice in the union of all their brethren. God had given them grace to show that fellowship openly. The missionaries there live together in peace, and preach in one another's chapels, and preach the same Gospel, and he heard Chunder Sen say once to Mr. Binney: "Would you kindly tell me what are the differences existing between you Christian people in England?" He had never found out those differences in India, and a finer testimony could not have been given to their unity and Christian fellowship. (Hear, hear.) There was one thing they were only just beginning to gain in India, viz., the influence of native Christian agency. So long as the Englishman was the fountain of knowledge, of power, and of zeal, and so long as the funds, the Bibles, and the Christian literature for schools came only from London, or Boston, or Paris, and did not come from the heart, the life, and the means of their own converts, they had gained little worth having. This old state of things was passing away. There was a brightness, and a life, and an earnestness, and a willingness, among the natives spoken of in the report they had heard, which he was delighted to see. The London Missionary Society had similar experience in China as well as in India. Also in New Guinea, where Mr. Lawes was at work. The Savage Islanders there were coming out in a new character. A hundred years ago they would not let Cook land on the island, and they repelled Williams when he offered to land there; but they were all Christians now. (Cheers.) There were six English missionaries now in New Guinea. (Renewed cheers.) Dr. Mullens then gave various interesting details as to the progress of Christianity

in Madagascar, and his recent mission to that island, which, he said, abundantly illustrated the necessity of native agency for the successful propagation of the Gospel. These Malagasy Christians did their work when no Europeans were there. They did it in the dark days of persecution when they were hid away in the woods and caves and went far down to the jungles and forests. They were missionaries, living Christians, talking the Gospel, preaching the Gospel, living the Gospel. Therefore it was that the work of God spread among the people, and His Word had been greatly exalted. It was now forty years ago since the persecution began. It crept on to greater dimensions and greater enmity until two hundred were sold as slaves, and eighteen were put to death, four burnt, and fourteen thrown from a precipice. He never felt so deeply concerned about the conversion of the Malagasy as when he stood upon the rock from whence the martyrs had been thrown, and the place where they were burnt, singing, "There is a happy land, far, far away." He had the pleasure of joining with Mr. Pillans in the opening of the memorial church, erected on the rock from which they were thrown. It was a great day for the people, because they recognised on that day the pain and vitality of those martyrs. Their Bibles and papers were preserved, and they were spoken of with honour. It was a strange thing that those people learnt during so many years to spread the Gospel among themselves. There were now 300,000 converts there, keeping the Sabbath, singing their hymns, reading the Bible, and building chapels all over the land. (Applause.) The speaker described some of the characteristics of Malagasy Christians, their sharpness, their habit of asking knotty questions, and their eagerness of welcome to missionaries. In one district, where a missionary had never shown his face, they found thirty-one churches—(cheers)—and Christian men, senior officers of the Government, all Christians, acting as pastors of the churches in the wisest and most efficient way, yet in the need of still wiser advice, and asking for men to advise them. A sermon had been preached in England from the words, "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way," and that was the ground on which the preacher wished to send a bishop to Madagascar. A more excellent way than what? Were they satisfied with the results he had told them? To carry the written word faithfully translated, and have the Christian catechism learnt by the people—could they give them any better way than that for spreading the Gospel, and when they saw that the people had got the Gospel in their hearts, could they suggest a more excellent way? (Cheers.) In conclusion, Dr. Mullens said there was no sphere of life in which stereotyped forms were more out of place than in missionary labour. He believed in the quickening, reviving work of the Holy Spirit, and he trusted He would help them more and more in all their work and plans that at the last they might lay their crowns at His feet and bring all nations and people and tongues to Him who loved them and died for them. (Loud cheers.)

The Rev. W. Brock, jun., moved the following resolution:—

This meeting rejoices in the fact that a large addition has been made to the staff of the society's missionaries during the past year, and also in that, to a considerable extent, the pecuniary liabilities incurred thereby have been met. It recognises with thankfulness the responses so far made to the committee's confidence in the liberality of the churches. With increasing liabilities, this liberality must still further be trusted, and this meeting expresses the hope that the committee's reliance on the churches, and on God, from whom all inspiration to self-sacrifice must proceed, will not be disappointed during the ensuing year.

It was sometimes said, why not leave the heathens alone, seeing that they had each a religion of their own? But, though goodness might be discovered in most of their religions, yet they must not shut out the sunshine of Christianity, with its message of reconciliation. If the heathen were silent, it was all the more necessary to send the Gospel to them.

The Rev. Dr. Cairns, of Berwick-on-Tweed, in seconding the resolution, expressed the pleasure it afforded him of being in London and taking part in the proceedings of that society. He rejoiced in its rapid progress, and hoped that its income of £40,000 would ere long be doubled. The church of which he was a minister began its mission-work in 1836 in Canada. After the mutiny they began to work in India; but now, by the good hand of God, they had some ten or fifteen missionaries, and he trusted they would soon have twenty. ("Hear, hear," and applause.) The funds now raised annually for foreign missions by the United Presbyterian Church amounted to well-nigh £40,000. After speaking of the wonderful story of the Madagascar Mission, he appealed to Christians to awake to a sense of the magnitude of the crisis and the importance of the time in which they lived, and to give their whole hearts to Him who alone was worthy, and then God would send His blessing. (Cheers.)

The resolution having been carried, the meeting was brought to a close by singing the doxology and by the benediction.

On Friday evening the twenty-seventh anniversary of the Young Men's Baptist Missionary Association was held in the Memorial Hall. There was a large attendance. Mr. George Williams, of St. Paul's-churchyard, occupied the chair. From the report read and "brief facts" printed it appeared that the association was formed in 1848, its chief object being to interest the young in the work of Christian missions in foreign lands. This it had

promoted by means of lectures in Sunday-schools, missionary libraries, auxiliary helps, and it had generally increased its income from a hundred to a thousand pounds. It is connected in some form or other with all the Baptist churches in London, and nearly the whole of the Sunday-schools in the provinces are affiliated with it. It has fostered a spirit of Christian sympathy for missions, and held many conferences for the full and free discussion of their character and work. In addressing the meeting the Chairman said he felt that though he belonged to another denomination of professing Christians they were all the servants of the same Master—all interested in the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom, and all anxious to encourage young men to take a deep and practical interest in mission work. He rejoiced in the success of that society, and would earnestly exhort all the young men he saw before him to consecrate all they were and all they had in some form or other to God. The Rev. Dr. Landels called attention to the fact that since the visit of Messrs. Moody and Sankey to Edinburgh and Glasgow thirty young men in the one city and eighty in the other had offered themselves for mission work. He gave some interesting accounts of the revival of some of their missions in Africa, and adduced facts to show that instead of failure, as had been prophesied by some who were weak in faith, there had been wonderful success. Mr. John MacGregor was very pleased to be present on such an occasion as the anniversary of a Young Men's Christian Mission. He could speak from personal knowledge and experience in nearly all quarters of the globe of the value of mission work. From the time he first read Henry Martyn's life, and the life and work of John Williams, the one in Persia, the other among the islands of the Pacific, he had felt a lively interest in Christian missions. In every part of the world where he had been he had made inquiry regarding the results which had attended the labours of the missionaries; and he felt assured that if any man qualified for the task could walk round the world and spend sufficient time in ascertaining the facts of each case, he would be able to write a book which would stir the heart of the Christian world as it had never been stirred before. With all his heart he would bid God speed to the young men's mission whose anniversary they held under such encouraging circumstances that evening. Mr. White, representative of the Young Men's Auxiliary in Birmingham, the Rev. F. D. Waldoock, missionary for Ceylon, and other gentlemen, addressed the meeting, the interest of which was sustained throughout.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

On Friday evening last in the rooms of the Union in the Old Bailey, the committee presented *in extenso* the report, parts of which will in due course be read at the seventy-first annual meeting (this evening). R. Barling, Esq., (Maidstone), presided in the unavoidable absence of Sir Charles Reed, who was unexpectedly called into Yorkshire to lay the foundation stone of some Sunday-schools about to be erected at Saltaire.

Mr. Groser presented the first portion of the report, the details of which, especially those referring to Sunday-school work on the Continent, were of an interesting character. In France, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Belgium, Russia, Turkey, and Hungary—in fact, everywhere with the exception of Italy, where no combined efforts had been possible, Sunday-school work was more or less prosperous. Of work, too, done in the colonies, a favourable report was given. Reference was made to the new wing which had been added to the public building in the Old Bailey, and it appeared also that the committee had assisted in the erection of 690 class rooms throughout the country. Several conferences had been held during the year, which had been productive of good results.

Mr. Hartley next presented his report of the statistical returns which had been received from the connected schools in town and country, and these once more exhibited an increase over previous reports. In thirteen metropolitan auxiliaries and 195 country Unions there were now 4,185 schools, 92,137 teachers, and 372,248 scholars. This extension, it appeared, had been going on continuously from year to year, and the number of schools, teachers, and scholars connected with the Union has more than doubled both in London and the country since the Educational Census of 1851. It further appeared from Mr. Hartley's report that 85 per cent. of the teachers in the London connected schools, and 76 per cent. of the teachers included in the country unions, are members of Christian Churches, which facts prove the essentially spiritual character of the agency employed, and suggest the desire that on another anniversary comes round a large proportion of the 25,000 teachers who have not yet made a public profession of faith may be brought to that decision for Christ which their office demands. 80 per cent. of the teachers in London, and 87 per cent. of the country teachers, were formerly Sunday-scholars. The enquiry into the number of scholars who have joined Christian Churches during a given year, though not supplying a complete epitome of the results of Sunday-school instruction, introduces a practical test of the most important point of operation. The figures reported under this head last year were unprecedently large, amounting to no less than 11,029 in the country unions, and

2,742 in the London auxiliaries; thus making a total of 13,771 brought to a decision for Christ during the year, being an increase upon the last report of 2,647. In conclusion it was stated that nearly 36,000 of the scholars in schools connected with the Union are already professing Christians.

Mr. W. Benham presented the cash statement, which showed the income to be (exclusive of the continental fund), 3,016L 7s. 7d.; and the expenditure, inclusive of overdraft balance of 610L 3s. from the previous year, 3,189L 1s. 4d., and the balance overdraft was 172L 13s. 9d. The continental fund, including balance in hand from previous year, had been 2,251L 3s. 4d., which, deducting 870L 11s. 6d. for payments, left a balance in hand of 1,380L 11s. 10d.

ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD.—This synod commenced its sittings on Monday evening, in Regent-square Presbyterian Church, when the Rev. Donald Fraser, D.D., preached from 1 Peter v. 1—4. From this text the preacher gave a very able exposition and defence of Presbyterian principles, showing their conformity with the teaching of Scripture, the practice of the early Church, and their suitability to modern times. After the sermon the synod was constituted, and the Rev. John Matheson, M.A., of Hampstead, elected Moderator. In his inaugural address the Moderator took notice of the steady progress of the Presbyterian Church in England. He stated that during the last ten years the number of congregations had increased 50 per cent., and that at the present time the Church was receiving its greatest additions and support in the South of England, and from those who had formerly belonged to the Established Church. He also took notice of the work which was being done by the American Evangelists now in London, and urged the ministers and elders before him to greater activity and zeal. At the close of the Moderator's address a vote of thanks was cordially given to Dr. Fraser, the retiring Moderator.

THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of the Wesleyan Missionary Society was held in Exeter Hall on Monday; the Lord Provost of Edinburgh in the chair. The meeting was densely crowded, the platform being occupied by about five hundred ministers and laymen, including most of the leading men connected with the denomination. The report read by the secretary, the Rev. Mr. Perks, began by congratulating the society on a continued increase of income. It then reported the condition of the missions, and concluded by an earnest appeal for support to the old and help for new fields of enterprise. The society is not strictly speaking a mission to the heathen abroad; it has something also to do with the heathen at home; and, considering some parts of Ireland in this category, work done in that field was reported as being in a hopeful state—the Irish Conference having 35 missionaries and 24 day-schools with 1,770 scholars. There are 30 missionaries in France and Switzerland, 19 in Germany, 20 in Italy, and 3 in Spain; the total of continental missions showing 75 missionaries, 5,269 church members, and 6,926 pupils in the schools. Special gratulations are expressed regarding the work in Italy and Sicily, a new and costly chapel having been erected at Naples, and a prosperous district mission having been established in Rome. In European nations beyond the bounds of Europe the mission work is reported to have been greatly extended. This field includes America, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, the districts in Australasia being occupied by 881 ministers, with 99,851 members, and 193,769 scholars, while those of South Africa report 93 missionaries, with 14,638 members, and 16,803 scholars. The missions to West Africa, in the British Colonies, number 113 ministers, with 53,139 members and 35,700 scholars. In relation to these, the report says, "Our hope for the future is in our native African ministry." The missions to purely heathen populations include India and Ceylon, China, and Polynesia, India being characterized as "the noblest trust God ever committed to a Christian nation." There are in India thirty-four missionary societies, employing 606 foreign missionaries connected with different denominations, eighty missionaries belonging to the Wesleyan Society in India and Ceylon. In China thirty missionary societies employ 200 European missionaries, besides natives, of which the Wesleyans support twelve missionaries, with 254 members and 478 scholars in their schools. In the Polynesian grant, which is managed by the Australian Conference, there are eighty-eight missionaries, of whom sixty-five are natives, 34,169 members, with 55,721 scholars. The Fiji Islands were specially noticed. King George is reported to be as favourable as ever, and now that Fiji is a British possession, it is expected that the missions there will become more than ever prosperous. The total of all these give 944 central stations, 7,047 chapels, 1,224 ministers and missionaries, 4,840 other paid agents, such as catechists and day-school teachers; 23,307 unpaid agents, such as Sunday-school teachers, &c.; 174,834 accredited church members, 17,173 on trial for membership, and 237,692 children in the day and Sunday-schools. The income of the society was reported to have been 184,039L, of which 136,409L are home receipts; and 47,630L from affiliated conferences and mission districts abroad. The expenditure had been 179,964L. The chairman congratulated the society on its present state and prospects. It was

working in harmony with all other Christian missions, using different means to reach the same ends. The Rev. Dr. Morley Pashon, president of the Wesleyan Conference, then addressed the meeting, and was followed by the Dean of Canterbury, who expressed his desire to co-operate with the society in the work in which it was engaged; by Professor Smith, the Rev. Mr. Simpson, and other ministers and gentlemen, in furtherance of the great objects of the mission.

NATIONAL TEMPERANCE LEAGUE.—The annual meeting of this society was held on Monday night, in Exeter Hall, which was well filled with an enthusiastic company. G. W. Anstie, Esq., of Devizes, a vice-president, took the chair, and was supported by a large body of clerical and other adherents of the League, including about 200 total soldiers. After prayer by the Rev. Harvey Brooks, M.A., Rector of St. Margaret's, Lothbury, Mr. Robert Rae, secretary, read the annual report, commencing with a reference to the recent ministerial conference at the Mansion House, which was attended by 300 ministers, of whom sixty-nine were clergymen of the Church of England, the conference being preceded by sixty sermons in metropolitan churches and chapels, and followed by public meetings at Guildhall and Devonshire House. About a hundred medical gentlemen had attended a conference of the League at Norwich, during the annual meeting of the British Medical Association, and a public meeting, addressed by six medical testators, had been held in Exeter Hall. There were now about 11,000 testators in the army. Military meetings had been held, and publications circulated at most of the garrison towns; 137 meetings had been held in London garrisons, and 660 "Guards" and 200 recruits had signed the pledge. The Royal Naval Branch of the League had increased from thirty-five to ninety-eight branches on board Her Majesty's ships; fourteen branches had been formed at Royal Marine garrisons, hospitals, and training-ships; and 5,000 "blue jackets" had signed the pledge during the year. The missionary to seamen had paid 4,186 visits to vessels in the port of London, and another missionary had given addresses to children at 650 elementary schools. About 2,350 lectures and addresses had been delivered by agents and honorary deputations, and sermons had been preached at Westminster Abbey, the City Temple, and the Metropolitan Tabernacle. At the Crystal Palace fete, attended by 38,780 persons, there had been no sale of alcoholic liquors at the drinking bars, and the same rule would be in operation at the approaching fete at the Alexandra Palace. The Temperance Record and the Medical Temperance Journal had been continued as the organs of the League. The total receipts amounted to 4,592L 2s. 11d., including 2,281L 1s. 4d. from subscriptions and donations. The meeting was addressed by the Rev. Lachlan Taylor, D.D., Toronto; Dr. George Elder, Nottingham; Rev. Arthur Hall; Dr. T. J. Barnardo; Rev. W. J. Mayers, Bristol; Rev. Simon Sturges, M.A., Wargrave; and Mr. Thomas Cook, the celebrated excursionist, who stated that he had been a teetotaller for forty years, and had never in all his journeys round the world resorted to alcoholic drinks, having everywhere found a supply of sweet water.

BAPTIST BRITISH AND IRISH HOME MISSION.—The annual meeting of this society was held on Tuesday evening at Bloomsbury Chapel, Mr. J. Barran, J.P., Leeds, presiding. The report was read by the Rev. J. Bigwood, secretary, from which it appeared that the work of the past year had included the building of several new and enlargement of existing chapels, and the employment of colporteurs or itinerant preachers. In Ireland the work of the society seems to have been specially advancing, large numbers being added to the community. In England the encouragement was not so great, 200 towns being reported as without a Baptist chapel. The income of the society for the year was stated at 5,100L 15s. 6d., the present balance in hand being 630L 11s. 1d.

SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.—The annual meeting of this society was held on Wednesday in Willin's Rooms. The Archbishop of Canterbury presided. The annual report stated that the income of the society for the year 1874 had been 134,826L 10s. 3d., the largest sum ever received in one year. The largest portion of this sum was devoted to the propagation of the Gospel in Asia. The society provided wholly or in part for the support of 503 ordained missionaries, distributed as follows:—Asia, 127; Africa, ninety-eight; Australia and the Pacific, fifty-three; America and the West Indies, 224; Europe, one. Amongst this number were included forty-two native clergy in India. There were also about 828 catechists and lay teachers, mostly natives, in heathen countries, and about 141 students in colleges abroad.

PRIMITIVE METHODIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.—The annual meeting of this society was held on Tuesday evening in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The chair was occupied by Mr. George Hodge, Hull. There were about 3,000 persons present. The report showed the progress which had been made by the society during the past year. The increase in mission stations abroad was 1,134. In the home missions twenty-five new chapels and fifteen new schools had been built, and twenty-seven new Sabbath-schools established. The income for the year was 46,706L 5s. 8d., or 11,498L 6s. 10d. more than was raised last year.

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